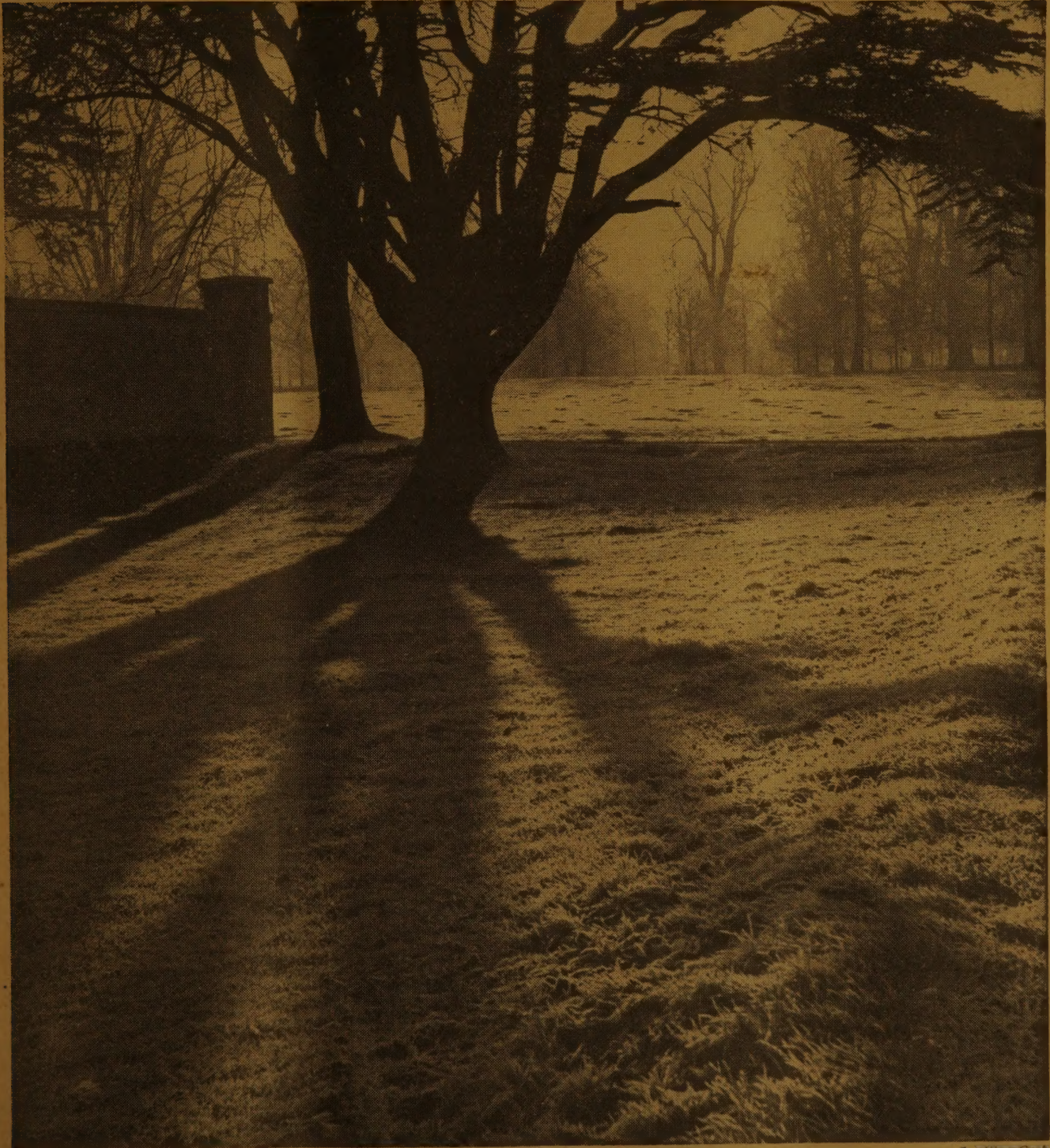


The Listener

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Winter scene in Woodstock Great Park, Oxfordshire

J. Allan Cash

In this number:

Russia and the Non-European World (George F. Kennan)

The Dramatist and his Work (J. B. Priestley)

A Religious Justification of Divorce (Julia de Beausobre)



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The Listener

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Russia, the Atom, and the West

The Non-European World

The fifth of six Reith Lectures by GEORGE F. KENNAN

EVER since I had the temerity to mention the possibility of a political settlement in Europe, people have been saying to me: 'Yes, but the Russians don't want a settlement'. I have not denied this; on the other hand I cannot confirm it. I do not think we know what the Russians *do* want; and I doubt that we are likely to find it out, so long as we persist in picturing it as something that exists in the abstract, independently of our own position and of what we might or might not be prepared to do in given contingencies.

But I think we might note that the Russian attitude in this question is going to be determined currently not just in the light of the situation in Europe but also in the light of developments in that great arc of territory that runs from China's southern frontier around through southern Asia and the Middle East to Suez and the north of Africa. Throughout this area things have generally been moving in recent years in a manner favourable to Soviet interests and unfavourable to our own. I can well understand that people in Moscow might wish to wait until they can see with greater clarity how far this process is going to carry before they give serious consideration to a settlement in Europe. Why should the Kremlin commit itself in Europe so long as it feels that it has a good chance of turning our flank by the exploitation of our weakness in other areas?

There are significant differences between the situation in this

southern band of states and the situation in Europe or in the area of Japan or Korea. In these places both we and the Russians have rights and formal relationships which cannot be unilaterally altered; and a future permanent status of these areas cannot very well be worked out except by negotiation and agreement between us. In the southern band of states, on the other hand, the formal status of the respective countries is not generally at stake, and there is little substance for negotiation between ourselves and Russia. Our problem in that part of the world is primarily one of the attitudes of the peoples who inhabit it. The things Moscow has been doing there—whether it be shipping arms or giving technical aid or making offers of trade or sending delegations around—however disturbing they may seem, are not things to which we can take formal objection. They are ones that are technically within the limits of international propriety. We do such things ourselves. We cannot ask the Russians to promise not to do them.

If the western position has been deteriorating in many parts of this area, this is because the peoples there have themselves been reacting in ways unfavourable to our interests. Moscow has been gratefully taking advantage of these reactions. But this is not a state of affairs which we can hope to improve by talking to people in Moscow. The Soviet leaders will see no reason—and I must confess that I can see none myself from their standpoint—why

they should pass up golden opportunities to increase their own prestige and influence in an area which is largely uncommitted and of immense political importance. If the states of mind prevalent among the peoples of this area present Moscow with just such opportunities, this is a problem which we must tackle on the plane of our relationship with these peoples, not on the plane of our relationship with Moscow.

What are these attitudes which have played so powerfully into the Soviet's hands? They are difficult to describe because they assume so many forms. They vary from country to country—sometimes even from class to class. They differ with respect to their objects. The feelings directed to Englishmen, for example, are not always the same as those directed to Americans. Their origins lie in such diverse things as the emotional legacy of colonialism, resentments arising out of the colour problem, jealousy over the material successes and outward affluence of certain Western countries, notably the United States, frustrations experienced by people who are for the first time bearing the responsibilities of power, an easy acceptance of Marxist *clichés* and symbols, and various prejudices and misapprehensions relating both to Russian society and to our own.

Irresponsible New Nationalism

Added to this are the impulses of a violent and sometimes irresponsible new nationalism—a nationalism which Moscow, having little to lose, has not hesitated to encourage, whereas the Western Powers, having more at stake, have been obliged to view it with concern and even to oppose it on a number of occasions. Finally, because all political reactions are in a sense cumulative, there has been a widespread impression throughout these regions that the West, whatever its merits or deficiencies, was in any case on the decline, whereas the star of Moscow was rising; and this has not failed to impress that sizable portion of mankind which has more respect for power and success than it has for principle.

In this bundle of impulses and reactions there is, in fact, something for everyone—something to appeal to every type of mind; and it is small wonder that it has all added up to a massive anti-Western complex, a complex in which a sneaking admiration for Western institutions and a desire to emulate them are mixed with a special, irritated sensitivity, an instinctive longing to see Western nations shaken and humbled, and a frequent inability to balance with any degree of realism the advantages of association with the West against those of association with Moscow. It is these states of mind, not what Moscow is doing to take advantage of them, which lie at the heart of our problem.

In this description of the origins of anti-Western feeling I did not mention our own mistakes. This is not because we have not made any—as we all know, there has been no lack of them; it is simply because I doubt that our mistakes have been among the root causes of this condition. I believe that this anti-Western animus has been primarily subjective in origin, and would have been there whatever we had done. On the other hand, there have been several tendencies in our recent behaviour which certainly have not made things any better, and which I am afraid we have to face up to.

Expecting Too Much

First of all, we have expected too much. Many of us seem to have believed that Russian influence could and should be excluded completely from this entire area. This attitude is surely unrealistic. It is perfectly natural that Russia, occupying the geographical position she does and being the Great Power she is, should have her place and her voice there too. By trying to persuade people that Russian influence has no place anywhere in this part of the world, we prepare in advance our own psychological defeats for the day when this turns out not to be in accord with political reality.

In addition to being unrealistic, this anxiety about Russian influence is often either unnecessary or exaggerated. Some of us seem to believe that no country can have anything to do with Moscow, even in the most normal ways, without at once losing its independence. Such a view exaggerates the sinisterness of Moscow's immediate purposes, which actually embrace a number of quite normal elements. It also involves an underestima-

tion of the talent of Asian and African statesmen for seeing through the more dangerous long-term aspirations of international communism and protecting their countries against them. Left to themselves, many of these statesmen would surprise us, I am sure, by their ability to take the measure of Moscow's motives and methods and to find resources of their own with which to protect the integrity of their national life.

I say 'left to themselves' because it seems to me that we Americans, in particular, have not helped matters by sometimes showing ourselves over-anxious about all this, by fussing over people, by acting as though it was we, rather than they, who had the most to lose if they went too far in their relations with Moscow. We have sometimes contrived to give them the impression that they would be reasonably safe, in fact, in playing close to the edge of danger, because if they got too close we could always be depended upon to come rushing in and rescue them with one sort of aid or another. We have even created a situation here and there where people believe they can exploit the threat of an unwise intimacy with Moscow as a means of bringing pressure to bear upon us. In this way, we have actually succeeded in dulling, to our own disadvantage, the sense of realism which these governments might normally have brought to their relations with the Soviet Union.

We have, at the same time, done less than justice to our own position; for we have contrived to give an impression of weakness and jitteriness which has no justification in the realities of our situation. When suggestions are made to us that if aid of one sort or another was not forthcoming, people will, as the saying goes, 'go Communist', surely, there is only one answer: 'Very well then, go. Our interests may suffer, but yours will suffer first'. I sometimes wonder whether it is not true that only those are really worth helping who are determined to survive and to succeed whether one helps them or not.

Psychological and Political Dangers

Another mistake that we have made is to treat as though they were purely military problems dangers that were actually mainly psychological and political. Of all the countries of this great area, only certain ones in the Middle East have a common border with Russia; and even here I have not seen the evidence of a Soviet intention to launch any overt military aggression. There is, of course, what one might call a problem of ultimate defence in this area; and perhaps military pacts of one sort or another do have their usefulness in meeting it. But this is a problem which could become real only as part of a general war; to confuse it with the protection of this area from Communist penetration and domination in time of peace is simply to defeat our own purposes. To me one of the most puzzling phenomena of this post-war era has been the unshakable conviction of so many people that the obvious answer to the threat of a growth of Communist influence is a military alliance or a military gesture.

The demands frequently made upon us by the independent countries of the world seem to me to run something like this: 'We', they say, 'are determined to have economic development and to have it at once. For us, this is an overriding aim, an absolute requirement; and we are not much concerned about the method by which it is achieved. You in the West owe it to us to let us have your assistance and to give it to us promptly, effectively, and without conditions; otherwise we will take it from the Russians, whose experience and methods we suspect anyway to be more relevant to our problems'. In response to this approach, a great many people in my own country have come to take it for granted that there is some direct relationship between programmes of economic aid on the one hand and political attitudes on the other—between the amount of money we are willing to devote to economic assistance in any given year and the amount of progress we may expect to make in overcoming these troublesome states of mind I have been talking about.

This thesis, as well as the reaction to it at home, seems to me to be questionable at every point. I find myself thrown off at the very start by this absolute value attached to rapid economic development. Why all the urgency? It can well be argued that the pace of change is no less important than its nature, and that great damage can be done by altering too rapidly the sociological and cultural structure of any society, even where these alterations may

be desirable in themselves. In many instances one would also like to know how this economic progress is to be related to the staggering population growth with which it is associated. Finally, many of us in America have seen too much of the incidental effects of industrialisation and urbanisation to be convinced that these things are absolute answers to problems anywhere, or that they could be worth *any* sacrifice to obtain. For these reasons I cannot fully share the basic enthusiasm on which this whole thesis is founded.

No Cosmic Guilt for Underdevelopment

I must also reject the suggestion that our generation in the West has some sort of a cosmic guilt or obligation *vis-à-vis* the underdeveloped parts of the world. The fact that certain portions of the globe were developed sooner than others is one for which I, as an American of this day, cannot accept the faintest moral responsibility; nor do I see that it was particularly the fault of my American ancestors. I cannot even see that the phenomenon of colonialism was one which could be regarded as having given rise to any such state of obligation. The establishment of the colonial relationship did not represent a moral action on somebody's part; it represented a natural and inevitable response to certain demands and stimuli of the age. It was simply a stage of history. It generally took place with the agreement and connivance of people at the colonial end as well as in the mother-country. Nor were the benefits derived from this relationship in any way one-sided. The Marxists claim that colonialism invariably represented a massive and cruel exploitation of the colonial peoples. I am sure that honest study would reveal this thesis to be quite fallacious. Advantages, injuries and sacrifices were incurred on both sides. Today these things are largely bygones. We will do no good by scratching around to discover whose descendants owe the most to the descendants of the other. If we are to help each other in this world, we must start with a clean slate.

I can well understand that there are instances in which it will be desirable for us from time to time to support schemes of economic development which are soundly conceived, which give promise, over the long run, of yielding greater stability and a new hopefulness for the countries concerned. I trust that we will not let such demands go unanswered when they arise. There is no fonder hope in the American breast, my own included, than that the experience we have had in developing a continent will prove relevant and helpful to others. Every American would like to see us take a useful part in solving problems of economic development elsewhere in the world. But action of this sort can be useful only if it proceeds on a sound psychological basis. If there is a general impression in the recipient countries that American aid represents the paying of some sort of a debt from us to them, then the extension of it can only sow confusion. The same is true if it is going to be interpreted as a sign of weakness on our part or of a fear that others might go over to the Communists, or if it is going to be widely attacked in the recipient countries as evidence of what the Communists have taught people to refer to as 'imperialism', by which they seem to mean some sort of intricate and concealed foreign domination, the exact workings of which are never very clearly explained.

Economic Aid

Unless such reactions can be ruled out, programmes of economic aid are apt to do more harm than good, psychologically; and it ought properly to be the obligation of the recipient governments and not of ourselves to see that these misinterpretations do not occur. To those who come to us with requests for aid one would like to say: 'You tell us, first, how you propose to assure that if we give you this aid it will not be interpreted among your people as a sign of weakness or fear on our part, or of a desire to dominate you'.

These are not the only psychological dangers of foreign aid. There is the basic fact that any form of benevolence, if prolonged for any length of time (even in personal life this is true), comes to be taken for granted as a right and its withdrawal resented as an injury. There is the fact that any programme of economic development represents a change in the terms of competition within a country and brings injury to some parties while it benefits

the others. It is hard to aid any other country economically without its having an effect on internal political realities there—without its redounding to the benefit of one political party and the disadvantage of another.

All these considerations incline me to feel that, desirable as programmes of foreign aid may sometimes be from the long-term standpoint, their immediate psychological effects are apt to be at best mixed and uncertain. For this reason, foreign aid, as a general practice, cannot be regarded as a very promising device for combating, over the short term, the psychological handicaps under which Western statesmanship now rests in Asia and Africa.

Finally, I do not think for a moment that the Soviet Union really presents the alternative people seem to think it presents to a decent relationship with the West. Moscow has its contribution to make to what should be a common task of all the highly industrialised countries; and there is no reason why this contribution should not be welcomed wherever it can be helpful. But Moscow is not exactly the bottomless horn of plenty it is often held to be; and it is rather a pity that it has never been required to respond all at once to the many expectations directed to it. We ourselves should be the last, one would think, to wish to spare it this test. The results might be both healthy and instructive.

The Middle East

What, then, is there to be done about these feelings of people in Asia and Africa? Very little, I am afraid, over the short term, except to relax, to keep our composure, to refuse to be frightened by the Communism alternative, to refrain from doing the things that make matters worse, and to let things come to rest, as in the end they must, on the sense of self-interest of the peoples concerned. The only place where we have an urgent and dangerous problem today, which admittedly demands something more than the long-term approach, is the Middle East.

Here, it seems to me, the essence of Western policy must lie in preventing the unsettled state of this area from leading to world war. It would be wholly unrealistic, I think, to suppose that the future development of relationships here can occur everywhere without violence. If we are going to go on bestowing the quality of absolute sovereignty on new political entities at the rate of approximately one a year, as we have been doing for the past fifty years, without much regard to the degree of political maturity and experience which they bring to the exercise of this responsibility, then I think we must expect that armed conflict on a local scale is going to continue to be a frequent feature of the political scene in any area of the world where these raw sovereignties predominate. The Middle East is such an area. On top of this general situation we have, in this instance, a special and most tragic source of instability in the failure of the Arab world to accept the establishment of the State of Israel.

It has long been a common platitude of international discourse, despite much evidence to the contrary, that peace is indivisible. I should certainly hope that this is not true of the Middle East; for, if it were, there would be little chance of avoiding a world war. Our concern should surely be not to seek the answer to all Middle Eastern problems by undertaking to involve in their solution the armed forces of the Great Powers, but precisely to find ways by which this can be avoided. Any entry of Russian or American forces into the Middle East, whether under United Nations' auspices or not, will produce reactions elsewhere which it would be better not to arouse.

Let us, of course, do everything we can to discourage hostilities in that part of the world. To this end let us seek to reconcile and unify where we can, not to divide. But let us at the same time be careful not to place ourselves in a position where such hostilities as cannot be avoided would inevitably have to involve us all. Short of the entry of Soviet troops into this area, there is nothing that could happen there that would be worth the cost of a world war. With anything else, we could eventually cope.

It will be pointed out that the security of the Western world not only can be, but is being, jeopardised by the fact that local regimes strongly hostile to the Western Powers and vulnerable to Soviet influence control resources and facilities that are important, if not vital, to our security. This is, of course, the situation that prevails today in Egypt and Syria. It could prevail elsewhere tomorrow.

I can see only one answer to this situation which would not enhance the chances of a world war: and that is that we should act with determination to reduce our dependence on the resources and facilities that are in question. This can be done in a number of ways; and each of them should probably have some place in Western policy. It can be done by cultivating alternatives to the use of these raw-material sources or facilities; it can be done by stock-piling; it can be done, in certain instances, by placing minor limitations on consumption at home. These possibilities were extensively discussed, and to some extent practised, at the time of the Suez crisis; I can see no reason why they should be ignored today. Their purpose would not be to free the Western countries entirely from the use of Middle Eastern oil or the Suez Canal. Nothing so drastic would be necessary. The purpose would be to give us greater flexibility in our dealings with the countries concerned and to restore to the West in general something of that basic bargaining power which was so woefully and conspicuously lacking at the time of Suez.

Development of Alternatives

The fact is that until we learn better how to live without some of these people we shall find it hard to learn to live with them. I was never able to understand why we were in such a hurry, a year ago, to be permitted to repair the Suez Canal and the Syrian pipe-line at our own expense—and this at a time when we were doing much better than people thought we should in learning to get along without them. We were on the right road; this road is still open to us today. I am sure that we would not have to go very far in the development of alternatives to an unhealthy reliance on the oil and facilities of the Middle East before we would see in the reactions of the governments concerned signs of a new and more realistic sense of self-interest.

I have no illusion that this development of alternatives will be easy for us to accomplish. It involves all those things that seem to be most difficult for our governments in times other than those of the most pressing danger. It involves intimate Anglo-American collaboration, not just sporadically in occasional conferences but in day-to-day operations. It involves the co-ordination of the operations of great private concerns with those of government. It may well even involve measures of domestic self-denial—a thing which for some reason our peoples seem to regard as

unthinkable except in moments of greatest military extremity.

I am sorry that the demand is such a harsh one. But it represents actually only a small part of that obligation of greater national discipline that we are now going to have to accept generally if we are to have any hope of making headway in our competition with Russia.

The Dust and Heat

People talk a great deal these days about the need for a new sense of urgency, and they are right to do so. I believe that this competition can be carried forward successfully without the disasters of another war. But I do not believe for a moment that this is a race which is to be run without dust and heat. It is the essence of our present situation that the dust and the heat must be incurred now, in a period of nominal peace and outward normality; they will do us no good if we wait, this time, to the last moment. If such things as a tighter economic discipline and a curb on certain forms of consumption in our countries is the price of the restoration of a sound Western position in the competition with Soviet power, I think it a cheap one compared with what else is at stake.

Measures along the lines I have suggested here will not bring us success everywhere. The deterioration has been in some respects greater than we like to admit. There will be instances where it will be best for us to cut our losses; and in this case I see no reason why the burden should not be fairly shared throughout the Atlantic Pact community. But what is important is that the dignity of the Western position in Asia and Africa should be restored and that the situation should be stabilised at some point. With the proper investment of realism and determination, such a point can, I am sure, be established. The diplomatic assets of Western Europe and North America are not yet so small that they would not suffice, under co-ordinated and purposeful direction, to accomplish this purpose. Once people in Moscow see that such a point does exist, and that what lies to our side of it is enough to assure our security and to leave us the ability to carry on indefinitely as a major factor in world affairs—once they see, in other words, that we are not really to be outflanked in the Asian and African theatres or any other—then I am sure they will not be long in appreciating the advantages to themselves of a fair settlement of political differences in the key areas of Europe and North-east Asia.—*Home Service*

Mr. Adlai Stevenson and Nato

By ERIC SEVEREID

FOR a long time despatches from abroad have been telling the American people that in European capitals Mr. Adlai Stevenson enjoys more personal trust than Mr. Dulles. But when the American delegation proceeds to the Nato meeting in Paris* Mr. Stevenson will not be with it, even though he is aware of his influence among European leaders, even though the President personally urged him to go. For days Mr. Stevenson has been whip-sawed by conflicting advice on this question. It is both a strength and a weakness with him that he listens long and often to advice. Indeed, when one goes to see him as a reporter, trying to find out what he intends to do on any matter, one finds oneself being closely questioned as to what Mr. Stevenson ought to do.

In the end, he usually decides for himself and he has done so again. This whole affair began when Mr. Dulles, and later, under public pressures, the President, asked Governor Stevenson to join in formulating the American policy positions toward the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in the week of *sputnik*. Mr. Dulles was attempting the political maximum: he wanted Stevenson formally to join the preparation staff, to approve and sign its recommendations, and formally to join in their presentation to the Allied Council. I believe Mr. Dulles, from the beginning, wanted Mr. Stevenson in the delegation to Paris.

This attempt, the most far-reaching move toward bi-partisanship in foreign affairs that the Eisenhower Administration has ever tried, sprang from two motives: first, the desire to blunt the increasingly severe Democratic Party attack on our foreign and military policies by taking their titular leader into camp; and, second, Mr. Dulles' genuine desire for fresh ideas.

Listening to advice, particularly from his political enemies, is not one of Mr. Dulles' notable weaknesses, but this time he is truly disturbed and anxious about the world drift. Mr. Stevenson had provocation enough for turning the whole thing down out of hand—in the fact that the President himself had not seen fit to extend the original invitation, in the fact that the President's Richelieu, Mr. Sherman Adams, had publicly if indirectly derided Mr. Stevenson's abilities. But he accepted, although he greatly altered, the ground rules. He became only a semi-detached consultant, reserving the right to take issue with those American positions with which he disagreed. Most of these positions and plans are in final form. As he said on Tuesday, Mr. Stevenson agrees with most of them; the plans for sharing nuclear information, the plans for weapons dispersal and control in Europe, the plans for a broader pooling of scientific talents, and so on. But the trouble, in Mr. Stevenson's view, is that these plans do not go nearly far enough. He regards the crisis of Nato as springing

from deeper and different causes. His reasoning begins with the premise that the real danger to the West is not a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union, although this must be provided against. The real danger, he thinks, lies in Russia's peaceful penetrations and the continued stalemate in the solution of specific political problems in specific areas.

Mr. Stevenson would like Washington to bring the Nato partners into full consultation on our China policy, for one example. He would like us all to join in a new approach to the Middle East, to consider at least a mutual guaranteeing of the armistice boundaries there, really to examine the value of an East-West arms embargo on that region. He would stop further reminders to the world about America's wealth and consumer production. And, most of all, he would fight much harder against Russian economic penetrations with far greater use of American money and resources.

But Mr. Stevenson has found no evidence that the Administration will make such attempts in Paris. He apparently has concluded that while Paris will be useful in tying up some loose ends, it will not provide a truly creative and inspiring new lead for the Western alliance. He did not wish to be formally associated with minor measures only, and he would run some risk of European journalists and politicians using him as a foil against the American delegation. He will not publicly take issue with what we do or fail to do in Paris for a good many weeks, for reasons of propriety, but this will not prevent a sustained attack by the Democratic Congress on official foreign and military policies—that was coming no matter what Mr. Stevenson did or failed to do. It will come, and it will dominate and charge the whole atmosphere in this capital until and unless the Administration raises a standard of high goals and high efforts to which a worried and waiting country can rally.—'At Home and Abroad' (Home Service)

The Tragedy of Indonesia

By B. N. GOEDHART

THE story of the relationship between Holland and Indonesia is essentially sad, very sad. What is more, it has all the trappings of a full-scale tragedy, because, in spite of all the apparent outburst of ill-feeling, and indeed hatred, there is an affinity of the soul between the Dutch and the Indonesians. We want so much to find each other in mutual respect, but somehow we cannot. You might accuse the Dutch of having a 'father complex' towards Indonesia, and in a sense you are right, for in our hearts we, the Dutch, look upon Indonesia as a wayward but beloved child: and we foster the illogical, preposterous, but nevertheless firm conviction that one day the prodigal child will return home, no longer a child but a fully-grown man. In other words we hope to be once again on good terms with Indonesia, not in the capacity of a colonial Power—those days are dead and gone—but as one free, straightforward country to another, welded together by a common history of more than 350 years.

In those three centuries we have had our shortcomings, many shortcomings indeed. But of this we are firmly convinced: we made Indonesia into a prosperous country, we sought the best for her, and we stood by her when the Japanese armies invaded Malaya and the Indies. All of the 250,000 Dutch nationals remained in the Indies, and thousands of them died at the hands of the Japanese. After the war we brought more than 100,000 soldiers to the 3,000 islands of Indonesia, because we were convinced this country was not ready for total independence. The tide was against us, however, and we had to withdraw, though we knew what was going to happen. It did happen. Relations grew worse and worse. By their thousands the Dutch workers left, until no more than some 50,000 remained. It is those 50,000 who are now virtual hostages at the hands of the Indonesians.

Now comes the question: what could the Dutch do about it? We could not bring this issue before the United Nations, because this is not a matter of aggression or danger to the peace of the world—though we think it is. We could not effectively bring this case before the International Court of Justice, because Indonesia is not party to the Hague Convention. We could withdraw the

shipping and air services we supply to Indonesia for her inter-island traffic, but only at the expense of disrupting the Indonesian economy. That is the last thing we want to do. So, we have taken the only step open to us and called for an immediate meeting of our friends in Nato.



President Soekarno of Indonesia

But, you will ask, the Indonesians say they only harry the Dutch because we do not want to cede New Guinea to them. I have a strong suspicion that the Indonesian Government would not be pleased if they got New Guinea. For then they could no longer make the Dutch the scapegoats for Indonesia's interior misfortunes. It is an old trick, at which Communists especially are very adroit, to stir up trouble about some foreign issue in order to distract the attention of the discontented masses from the inner weakness of their own Government.

For in reality there is no Indonesia as such any more. There is only Java under the authority of the central Government at Djakarta. The Outer Provinces—Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes—refuse obedience to the central Government. They have opened their own trade relations with foreign countries and have formed their own unified military command. Gradually the central Government loses control, and it is to hide this reality that the Government at Djakarta raises an outcry over New Guinea, with as scapegoats the old masters, the Dutch. Let them do so, but do not let them shower their wrath upon defenceless

Dutch subjects: that is just inhuman.

To the British we say: take heed. Now it is the turn of the Dutch; tomorrow maybe of the British. Let me give some official figures, provided by the Indonesian Government. Last year two-thirds of Indonesian foreign payments went to the United States, a quarter went to the Netherlands, and only 13 per cent. went to the United Kingdom. In the first half year of 1957 the figures were totally different: one-third went to the United States, only 12 per cent. to the Netherlands, and over half to the United Kingdom. This then is your material interest in Indonesia. But that is only one aspect of the situation. For us, the Dutch, the long-term interests of humanity are much more at stake.

—'At Home and Abroad' (Home Service)

The Listener

What They Are Saying

Soviet broadcasts on the Reith Lectures

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. The articles in THE LISTENER consist mainly of the scripts (in whole or part) of broadcast talks. Original contributions are not invited, with the exception of poems and short stories up to 3,000 words, which should be accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. The reproductions of talks do not necessarily correspond verbatim with the broadcast scripts. Yearly subscription rate, U.S. and Canadian edition: \$7.50, including postage. Special rate for two years \$12.50; for three years \$17.00. Subscriptions should be sent to B.B.C. Publications, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, England, or to usual agents. Entered as second-class mailing matter at the Post Office, New York, N.Y. Trade distributors within U.S.A., The Eastern News Company, New York 14, N.Y.

The Common Man

THE present century is often called the age of the Common Man, although the 'angry young men' would deny it; for they still believe there is an Establishment into which it is very difficult for the common man to penetrate. Others would say that if an Establishment does exist, it consists of thousands and not of hundreds. In any case it can scarcely be denied that in our country at least—and certainly in the United States—immense deference is shown to the common man. The advertising profession is devoted to the service of his interests. The entertainment professions seek to meet his needs. The popular newspapers set out to flatter him. The ancient institutions of the Establishment are assaulted by his advance. Anyone who compares the London of today with that of thirty years ago can find examples of the changes wrought by the demands of the common man.

But if this is so, it is a comparatively modern phenomenon. Dr. C. V. Wedgwood in a recent lecture given at the University of Leicester* maintained that 'the middle years of the seventeenth century are particularly interesting because, in the voluble clash of opinions which was stimulated by the disorders of the Civil War, the voice of the Common Man becomes for the first time clearly distinguishable'. In those days the common man appears to have spent a great deal of his time reading the Bible, which was badly printed in large numbers, and deriving some odd notions from it. The Royalists and the Parliamentarians competed for his services as a soldier and he grew to have some sense of his own importance in the scheme of things. Thus emerged the Leveller movement, perhaps the first organised democratic movement in British history, although its leader, John Lilburne or 'Freeborn John', particularly prided himself on being a 'gentleman'. The apprentices of London, who were not necessarily Levellers, were also extremely vociferous and once succeeded in invading the House of Commons and forcing their wishes upon it. Later in the century the common man made a fleeting appearance during Monmouth's rising. But the glorious Revolution was the work of the Establishment (that was why it succeeded while the Puritan Revolution failed) and during the eighteenth century government became the privilege of an oligarchy.

If Dr. Wedgwood is right in suggesting that the voice of the common man was first heard during the Civil Wars, it was a more or less isolated historical event. It was the Industrial Revolution and the great rise in population that followed it that made politicians conscious of his existence. In Sir Winston Churchill's recent historical volume on eighteenth-century England and America one would look in vain to find the common man, and even during the Napoleonic Wars, after the impact of the Industrial Revolution, Wellington's soldiers were thought of as cannon fodder. Moving into the nineteenth century, readers of the novels of Charles Dickens and others can see that the common man was still if not down-trodden at least aware of his place in society. By the turn of the century G. K. Chesterton could still speak of 'the silent people' whose voice had yet to be heard. From the broadest historical point of view it has only been heard echoing and re-echoing in our own lifetimes.

* *The Common Man and the Great Civil War*: Leicester University Press, 3s.

MOSCOW BROADCASTS gave considerable publicity to certain themes in Mr. Kennan's Reith Lectures broadcast by the B.B.C. Seldom quoting what he actually said, and sometimes misquoting him, they stressed that while his 'anti-Soviet ideas' were not tenable, he had advanced 'more or less practical proposals on the subject of German unity', and the withdrawal of foreign troops from Europe. German listeners were told he had 'made the Western Powers responsible' for the impasse over Germany, and had spoken of 'the fiasco of the policy of strength maintained by the Western Powers'. The Soviet home audience was told Mr. Kennan had said 'it is difficult to overestimate the futility' of equipping the forces of Nato countries with nuclear weapons, and that 'the only way to solve the problem of tension in Europe was the creation of a zone of neutral countries'. Swedish listeners were told that Mr. Kennan's statement that 'the West must give up the obsession that Russia intends to attack west Europe' should 'receive the greatest attention':

If one gives up this hypothesis it will be necessary to give up the whole of Nato, the United States bases, and the enormous military expenditure—that is, to give up the policy of the American rulers. The former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow is destroying, perhaps without even realising it himself, the military structure which their militarists and diplomats have built up so carefully during the post-war years. That these wise words have been spoken by an American politician proves that facts are stronger than American propaganda dogmas.

Listeners in Britain were told:

In building bases for rockets on the territory of other countries, the U.S.A. pursues its own selfish aim. It wants to divert the first blows of retaliation from its own territory. Thereby it threatens to turn west Europe into a battlefield in the event of atomic and rocket war. . . . Mr. Kennan considered the establishment of rocket bases in west Europe a fatal move, and urged west European countries to refrain from it. I don't think that there is any need to prove the soundness of this point. Even people who know very little about military matters realise that if the United States brass unleashes war, the first retaliatory blows will be inflicted on the U.S. bases in west Europe. Mr. Kennan also made it clear that he is against the U.S.A. arming its west European allies with nuclear weapons. This move, in his opinion, would have fatal consequences. Mr. Kennan's warning assumes particular significance on the eve of the Nato Council meeting which is to discuss the arming of Nato countries with nuclear weapons. . . . If we disregard some of the old allegations, such as the Communist menace, we may say that Mr. Kennan's lecture as a whole showed his sober-minded evaluation of the international situation.

According to a broadcast from East Germany, Mr. Kennan, Mr. Bevan, the West German Social-Democrats, and 'by implication' the Danish and Norwegian Governments, were all advocating the same course suggested by the Soviet Union—the withdrawal of nuclear weapons and foreign armed forces from both German States. It was most interesting

that people of this kind, looking for . . . a realistic path to world peace, must sooner or later adopt views in line with proposals emanating from the Socialist camp.

On December 5, Moscow radio reported Mr. Khrushchev's interview with two Brazilian journalists in which he claimed that 'by launching the *sputniks*, socialism has won its competition with capitalism'. Although *sputniks* were primarily of scientific importance, they were 'also important for the defence of the Soviet Union', since they were launched on the basis of inter-continental ballistic rockets.

According to the Moscow broadcast version of Mr. Khrushchev's remarks to Mr. Hearst, the supply of nuclear rocket weapons to the Warsaw Pact countries would depend on the line to be followed by the Nato bloc countries:

The rocket weapons possessed by the Soviet Union are designed for use from its own territory, so that there is no necessity to station them in Warsaw Treaty countries. We also have short-range rockets. Our military units stationed in the German Democratic Republic naturally have all types of weapons necessary to make them combat-worthy and to repulse an aggression.

Did You Hear That?

A BAD YEAR FOR FRENCH WINE

FACED WITH THE coming winter, you will probably not care to be reminded of what happened last winter, but one result has only now become apparent: through the late frosts, followed by rain, which was followed in turn by mildew, 1957 was a disastrous year for the French wine industry. THOMAS CADETT, B.B.C. Paris correspondent, spoke about this in 'From Our Own Correspondent'. 'The biggest slump in production', he said, 'was in the Bordeaux district, well under half of the average. In spite of such a small harvest the French will have to go on selling wine abroad, for a market once lost is not easy to regain. And so, to meet their own needs, they must import about 22,000,000 gallons until the next harvest. Meanwhile prices have been soaring and will, no doubt, continue their climb.'

'The earlier pessimistic forecasts of poor quality have not been fully borne out. Speaking generally, it has been a moderately good year, though nothing like the famous ones which earn three or four stars in the wine catalogues. Burgundy has been fairly good. Last year's harvest was so vile that no attempt was made to hold the age-old auction at the Hospice de Beaune, in the very heart of the Burgundy country. This year's lots went at double the prices of 1955 and produced a total of over 60,000,000 francs as compared with 45,000,000 two years ago.'

'That leads to a question which I have often heard asked during the past few years: Are the wines of France as good as they used to be? My answer is 'yes and no'. I am not talking about the millions of gallons of stuff which is often blended in bulk and hardly varies in quality from year to year. What I have in mind are the better wines, which have a good name and are subject to official supervision. These may vary from the *petit bourgeois*, such as a small Vouvray, up to the great nobility, like a Mouton Rothschild from Bordeaux, or a Clos Vougeot in Burgundy. I never drive past that splendid plot of ground without a respectful nod of the head, remembering that on one occasion Napoleon I halted his troops there and made them present arms before moving on. With great names like these one can usually be sure of the quality, unless the wine is not genuine. There is less danger of faking in France itself, for the verification is strict and the penalties are fierce.'

'I remember being enthralled as a young journalist, thirty years ago, by a meeting here in Paris of experts who were also wine growers. There were about fifteen of them, and they sat round an oval table in a small room with baskets of bread in front of them. This was to clear their palates between each tasting. Then three or four unmarked bottles were brought in and each man took a reflective sip after holding his glass up to the light and sniffing the bouquet or aroma. Almost invariably one of them—and sometimes most of them—would point at a fellow-grower and say, 'This comes from your place', and almost invariably they were right. In many cases they even followed it up by giving the vintage year.'

'M. Pierre, my old and dear friend, who owns a small Parisian restaurant with a magnificent cellar, says that the chief trouble is that there has been a sad falling away of standards because of the heavy demand for vintage wine. Nowadays, instead of uprooting a tired vine, growers will re-graft it. And whereas

in the old days they would distil their wine into alcohol if a bad season had affected its quality, now they bottle it and send it out all the same, knowing that some ignorant person will buy it because of the label and because of the high price. That, said M. Pierre, is perfectly legitimate, and he added with a sigh, "it is also perfectly deplorable".

'I asked him about the general standard over a period of years. This, he told me, remains pretty consistent. In a good year the great wines seemed to be as good as ever. "I use the word 'seem,'" he said, "because, for example, 1947 had all the characteristics of a great year". And here he paused and called the waiter and said: "Bring us a bottle of Chambolle Musigny 1947". When I had tasted it he looked at me enquiringly. "Very fine in its way, but a bit thin", I said. And I was indeed proud when he agreed with me. And then he said, "It will be another ten years before we can say whether it is as good as the 1937 version, which you are steadily drinking me out of. But I think it will be all right".'



Ancient slate palette from Hierakonpolis, Egypt—now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford—with carvings including (at bottom left) an animal figure (possibly a man wearing an animal's head) playing a pipe or flute

MUSIC IN PHARAOH'S EGYPT

'Discoveries made in recent years in the field of Egyptology have lifted the veil which has up to now shrouded the civilisation of Pharaonic times', said DR. HANS HICKMAN, Professor of Comparative Musicology at Hamburg University, in a European Service talk. 'Through the inscriptions on papyrus and on stone, the way in which these ancient peoples lived, and even the way they thought and felt, is becoming increasingly clear to us. Unfortunately, up to now, the element of sound was missing. Although they can read all the writings, Egyptologists know the actual sound of only a few words, and as a real musical notation in our sense was unknown to the ancient Egyptians, we do not yet know the melodies that were sung by the many popular singers of those days.'

'The only way in which we can fill this gap in our knowledge and actually listen to the sounds the ancient Egyptians heard is by means of their musical instruments, many of which still exist today, having been found in the tombs in a good state of preservation, thanks to the hot, dry climate of Egypt.'

'I began my investigation by analysing bells, sistra—a kind of rattle—and cymbals. All three are made usually of bronze; and all three have been used in the temple. The pagan bells of the Pharaonic priests were taken over later by the Copts and reached in this way the Christian liturgy, appearing in Rome as the little bells which are still used today in the Catholic Mass. The sistrum was the holy rattle of the priests and priestesses and is now still used by Christians in the Middle East, from Syria to Ethiopia. The cymbals, too, were used during services in the temple; and, as we read in the Bible, the cymbal player was an important person in the temple rites of Jerusalem.'

'It was not difficult to study the sounds made by these primitive percussion instruments, but after this preliminary work I began to analyse more important instruments, both of metal and of wood. So, in the course of time, I was able to study first the trumpets of ancient Egypt, and other wind instruments like the flutes and clarinets, and then their harps, lutes, and lyres.'

'One of the primitive instruments found among certain tribes today, the bull-roarer, existed also in ancient Egypt. The bull-roarer is made of wood carved in the shape of a fish. A string

is attached to it and it is whirled round in the air, when it makes a roaring sound. Primitive peoples believe this sound to be connected with spirits and use this instrument in initiation rites. Like the boomerang, the bull-roarer is used by tribes who worship totems. As the ancient Egyptians used the boomerang as a weapon, and worshipped sacred animals such as the crocodile, Egyptologists believe that they went through a totemistic stage of civilisation. I therefore made special efforts to discover whether the bull-roarer had ever been used in ancient or in modern Egypt. By chance, I found in the Cairo Museum a prehistoric bull-roarer which was wrongly described in the catalogue as a wooden object of unknown significance. At almost the same time I discovered that the bull-roarer is still used in Middle and Upper Egypt for magic cures for certain kinds of illness.

'A very old but highly developed wind instrument is the flute. This, too, was used in prehistoric times. A wonderful musical scene, carved in stone, which you can see at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, shows us a man wearing a mask like a jackal's head and playing the flute. One part of the scene shows wild animals of the desert—the lion hunting the gazelle, and other beasts attacking their prey. The second part of the picture shows the same animals dancing peacefully together to the music of the flute player. Since the jackal-headed god is Anubis, the god of death, we must see this scene as an illustration of the ancient belief that all creatures who in life are enemies are equal when they come before the god of death. The oldest of these holy flutes are preserved in the Cairo Museum'.

THE ABYSSINIAN CAT

'Interest in breeding and showing pedigree cats, what we call the Cat Fancy, has grown a great deal in the last few years', said SIDNEY DENHAM in Network Three. 'More cats are being shown and more people are going to cat shows. That is not only in Britain, but in all parts of the world where the cat is a domestic animal.

'The Abyssinian is one of the breeds that has attracted much interest recently. At the end of the war there were thought to be only about a dozen pedigree Abyssinian cats in the whole of the country. There are several hundred Abyssinian cats in many different parts of the world. All of them, with perhaps one or two exceptions in the United States, have been imported from this country or bred from imports.

'I find people have been attracted to the breed for a variety of reasons. One is the beauty of the Abyssinian's subtle colouring and the unusual grace with which its moves, rather like a miniature puma. Then, their owners find them cats of unusual character, intelligent and very companionable. Many people have undoubtedly been attracted by the belief that Abyssinians are the oldest breed of domestic cat, that they are the cats the ancient Egyptians held sacred and immortalised in countless bronzes and statues. And finally, perhaps, there is the great difficulty of breeding an Abyssinian which cannot be faulted on the show standard.

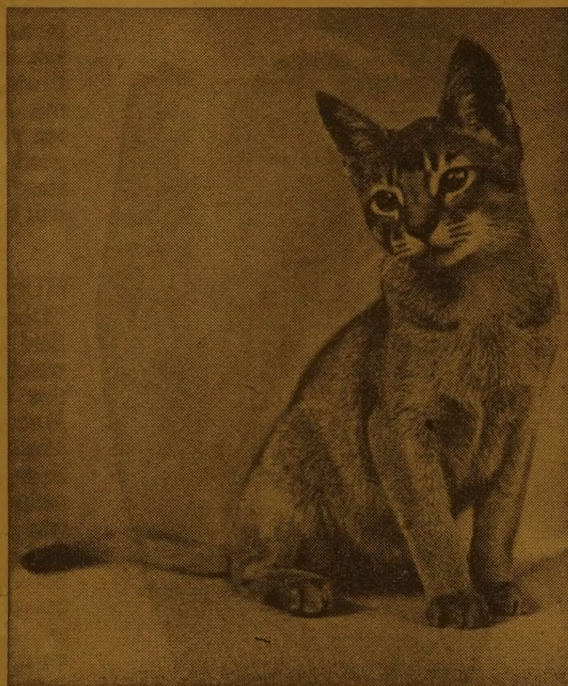
'Although it is only since the war that the breed has become popular, especially in the United States and on the Continent, Abyssinians were first entered in a show in this country under that name about seventy-five years ago. The origin of the breed in England is obscure. But we probably owe it indirectly to King Theodore of Abyssinia when, ninety years ago, he arbitrarily threw some Britons into prison. After other measures had failed to secure their release, the British Government sent a large expeditionary force under General Napier to bring the King to his senses. So it came about that the cats peculiar to Abyssinia were noticed for the first time. In his curious *Book of Cats*, published at that time, G. H. Ross noted that in Abyssinia cats are so

valuable that a marriageable girl likely to come in for a cat is regarded as quite an heiress.

'As far as I know, no cat from Abyssinia has been imported into England during the present century. There are cats like those we call Abyssinians in what is now Ethiopia, but it seems doubtful whether importing them would be helpful, for the Abyssinian as we know it today is the result of selective breeding over many years aimed at producing an idealised version of the ancient sacred cat. The characteristic feature of the Abyssinian's coat is that it is ticked—each separate hair has two, or preferably three, bands of colour. This is one of Nature's great camouflage effects and it enables an Abyssinian to melt into any background'.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LECTURES

Popular science lecturers were in great demand in eighteenth-century Bristol. ERIC ROBINSON spoke about them in 'As It Happened' (West of England Home Service).



Abyssinian cat: champion Kreeoro Sheba, owned by Mrs. V. E. Major

'The lecturers travelled from town to town spending a month perhaps in Exeter, a fortnight in Taunton, another month in Bristol, then northwards to Stourbridge, Birmingham, Derby, and so on. These lectures were entertainment as well as instruction, rather like the Christmas lectures which the Royal Institution organises for school-children today. The lecturers brought with them a kind of travelling science museum, including working models of all sorts. Different kinds of steam-engine were in the show, and wonderful models to show the relative movements of earth, moon, sun, and planets, including one with the remarkable name of Eidouranian. In some cases the equipment was worth several hundred pounds.

'You usually paid for a whole course, like a season ticket, but your ticket was transferable. You could, however, pay for a single lecture at about half-a-crown a time. Women and children could attend for half-price. The lectures were usually held in a "pub" or a large public room like the room over the Old Market House in Bristol. Here is a typical

announcement in the *Bristol Journal*, September 14, 1776:

Mr. Warltire's First Lecture will be at the Bell in Broad-street, on Wednesday the 18th of September Instant, at Eleven in the morning; the remaining Lectures on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday following. And for the better Accommodation of Company, the same Lecture will be repeated at Six in the Evening of each Day that was given in the morning.

'Another performer in Bristol was Dr. Thomas Beddoes, the father of the poet Thomas Lovell Beddoes and a great physician. He did a great deal to improve science teaching in Oxford where he was for a time Reader in Chemistry. Then he came to Clifton, where he soon strengthened his reputation as a physician and scientist. Among other things, he wanted the study of anatomy to be improved in Bristol's hospital and so he began courses of lectures on the subject. But it was a startling innovation to hold courses of lectures on anatomy for ladies. This is what Beddoes' biographer says:

At the close of the course a few lectures on the general laws of life were delivered to the audiences united. No circumstance occurred that could give alarm to the most timid female delicacy, or excite disgust in the most refined mind.

'But apart from his own lectures Dr. Beddoes brought to Bristol the greatest public lecturer of all time—the young Humphrey Davy. He learnt his trade in Dowry Square and at the Red Lodge. At the Red Lodge one night, after a lecture on anatomy given by the two surgeons, Bowles and Smith, Humphrey Davy started his career as a public lecturer. His subject was "the gases given out by the decay of flowers"'.

The Art of the Dramatist—II

The Dramatist and his Work

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

IN my previous talk, on the nature of the drama*, I declared that the theatre exists primarily to provide us with a unique kind of experience that I called 'dramatic experience', and this demanded from us, as audience, a response on two different levels of the mind, one concerned with the imaginary life of the play and its personages, the other with the actual theatrical presentation of that play and its personages. So, I said, we go to see *Prospero* and Sir John Gielgud, *Imogen* and Dame Peggy Ashcroft; about which there will be more in my next talk, when I arrive at the dramatist's colleagues, the players. But now we come to the dramatist himself, and here again, as before in our general consideration of the drama, I believe this theory of 'dramatic experience' will give us some insight into a complicated subject and help us to avoid some common mistakes.

Good Plays Hard to Write

We can begin by asking ourselves a familiar question, far more often asked than answered. It is this: Why are good plays so hard to write? Perhaps you do not believe they are. If so, then either you are a great find for the English theatre, which badly needs your genius, or you can never have tried to write plays. At first sight, plays would seem easier to write than—let us say—novels. To begin with, they are generally much shorter, which appears to be a notable advantage. They are written entirely in dialogue and so do not demand an effective and pleasing narrative prose style. As a rule they present far fewer characters than an ordinary novel does. It would seem, too, that the playwright does not need as much general knowledge of life as a novelist does. Again, he does not do everything by himself as the novelist does, for he has directors, scene designers and painters, lighting experts, and beautiful actresses and clever actors, all working for him. So at first sight he appears to have all the advantages. Yet the fact remains that good plays are very hard to write. And horribly bad, impossible plays are all too easy to write. I have in fact been astonished over and over again by the way in which writers distinguished in other forms, good poets or novelists or essayists, can cheerfully submit attempts at play-writing that are appallingly silly. It is as if clever writers could lose all judgement when they approach the theatre. Perhaps its so-called glamour goes to their heads.

Let us take a closer and more searching look at the novelist and the dramatist. The novelist may have to do it all himself, but generally he does it for one reader at a time, a reader who is devoting himself to the novelist's work at the most appropriate hour, when all his or her sympathies are willing to be engaged. The dramatist, on the other hand, has to hold the attention of his audiences between certain fixed times. They have to take it or leave it, unlike novel readers who can put their books aside when they are bored or want to do something else. The fact that a play compels us to sit there attending to it means that we are far more irritated by it if we cannot respond to it properly. This explains why dramatic critics are generally more bad-tempered and abusive than book reviewers. There is, too, a certain growing fatigue in our attention, so that if a play has a poor last act, we tend to condemn the whole piece. If novels were as harshly judged, if their closing chapters had to be even better than their opening chapters, many works of fiction that now pass as masterpieces would have been condemned as failures. Finally—and this is a most important point—in the prevailing conditions of our theatre, the dramatist cannot select his audiences as the novelist does and cannot help doing. The dramatist has to hold the attention of perhaps a thousand people at the same time, and they are a thousand very different people, so that what may be boringly obvious to the scientist or lawyer in the stalls may be bewilderingly difficult to the housewife in the dress circle and the greengrocer in the gallery. So any dramatist attempting an

unusual theme, which asks for some exposition, soon runs headlong into some tricky problems.

The dramatist's chief difficulty, about which the novelist knows nothing, arises from the fact that he must provide his audiences with this double-impact experience received on two different levels of the mind at the same time. In order to do this successfully—and unless he does it he will fail in the theatre—the dramatist himself, right from the first, must do a double job, on two levels more or less at the same time. If he fails on one level or the other, if he cannot establish a true balance between them, then the experience ultimately demanded by his audience will be faulty, unsatisfactory, unrewarding. And it is this above all that makes good plays so hard to write. Usually one level or the other is neglected or going wrong; both cylinders are not firing. Just as the audience must receive the play both in terms of its imaginative life and in terms of its theatrical presentation, both as life and as theatre, so the dramatist must conceive and create his play, from the beginning, in both these terms. So everything for him has a double aspect. And I do not hesitate to add here that the born dramatist is the writer who welcomes rather than resents this double aspect, who finds himself, almost without taking thought, working easily on these two levels at once.

For example, let us suppose the dramatist is working in the familiar theatrical convention of our time, writing a play about the Jones family in Kensington. This family consists of father, mother, daughter, son. These four people must take on life in his imagination. He must know all about them, must live for the time being their life in Kensington. This is one man who really must keep up with the Joneses. But so far he is doing no more than a conscientious novelist must do, and indeed on this level he need not do as much as the novelist must do, for he will not in fact show us as much of the Joneses as we would find in a good novel about them. But this is only half the task of the dramatist, who is writing not to be read but to be performed in a theatre. He has also to function properly on the other level, that of the theatre. So while he lives intensely with those four members of the Jones family, he has also to be sharply aware of the two actors and the two actresses for whom he is writing parts. He is not only creating characters, he is also shaping and colouring fouractable parts. While one half of his mind is in the Jones' sitting room in Kensington, the other half is working with a box set with two practicable doors erected on a stage. Alongside the exciting problems of the Jones family is another and quite different set of problems, concerned not with middle-class London life but with the elaborate techniques of theatrical performance. So everything, I repeat, has this double aspect.

A Balance between Two Levels

We can now understand what is wrong with so many plays, both plays in manuscript and some that reach the stage. If the writer thinks he need only concern himself with the Jones family and their fortunes, he will go wrong, because, as we have seen, audiences themselves are not completely involved with the Joneses but depend for their experience on a balance between two levels, one of which does not belong to the Joneses but to the theatre. This explains why many fine poets or brilliant novelists have failed as dramatists: they could not adequately undertake the double duty. But it also explains why very often the artful and experienced theatre man, who knows all the tricks, fails to write anything worth our time and money. For he works too hard on one level, that of theatrical presentation, to the neglect of the other, on which the Joneses have their being, the level of imaginative life; so that his work seems stale, brittle, false, does not create true dramatic experience for us. We may simplify the matter here by declaring that true drama is created by bringing life to the theatre, and the theatre to life. And this is hard to

achieve. It is rarely possible to be equally satisfying on each level: as character, action, life, on the one hand, and as the highly conventional art of the theatre, on the other. And unless the dramatist goes to work like an organist playing on two keyboards at once, the audience cannot respond as it wishes to respond.

This is true no matter what sort of play the dramatist is writing. It is a mistake—and one all too often made—to imagine that a change of theatrical convention, a new style, a different sort of stage, will release us from this basic difficulty. The balance is still essential, the dramatist must still work double, if instead of writing about the Joneses in Kensington he is writing about Cleopatra, Robin Hood, or the captain of the first spaceship, if the Jones' sitting room has been turned into white steps and cylinders against a black curtain; whether the Joneses speak in sloppy realistic prose, or in that rather dubious mixture of knockabout slang and purple passages we find now in so many American plays, or in rhymed couplets or Shakespearean blank verse or the much blander verse favoured by contemporary poetic dramatists.

Theatrical Conventions

Remember, I am only saying that the dramatist cannot escape his basic responsibility merely by a change of convention. What I am *not* saying is that it does not matter what convention he chooses. That is something quite different. His choice will be dictated by his temperament, particular skills and preferences and prejudices, and by what he believes his audience capable of understanding. Clearly if the audience does not understand a certain kind of theatre, then that kind of theatre does not exist as a convention for that audience. A Japanese might write a *No* play about the Jones family that had astonishing insight into their characters and relationships, but an ordinary Western audience would be either too bewildered or too amused to achieve the right response. On the other hand, a skilful dramatist may be able to make a little bridge between two quite different conventions, as Thornton Wilder did in 'Our Town', in which he makes effective use of certain features of the classical Chinese theatre in a play intended for Western audiences. We could do with more of these experiments, in which two different theatrical conventions are used to produce another, different from either.

The contemporary dramatist has many difficulties to face unknown to dramatists in other periods, notably the challenge of film and television, the drift away from the theatre in many sections of the public, the recent steep rises in costs. But the contemporary dramatist has at least one advantage, he is no longer the servant of one particular convention, as he would have been fifty years ago. He can write in verse or prose; if he does not like the picture-frame stage, he can break out of it; if he is tired of realism, he can try his hand at expressionism, symbolism, surrealism; and whatever he decides to do, if he does it boldly and with conviction, he will probably find directors and players ready to interpret his work.

A Pattern Stage?

I am not pretending there are no difficulties here. If he is an English dramatist, he will soon discover there are very few recognised playhouses adapted for experimental work. We are badly short of these, for, unlike people on the Continent or in America, we seem now to lack the will or the capacity or both to build theatres, even though the far more elaborate and costly erection of television transmitting stations does not seem too much for us. But it is significant—and much to the point here—that the new playhouse planned by an enterprising amateur group in West London will have a stage so contrived that it is not tied to any particular convention; and in this respect it might serve as a pattern and example to all builders of new theatres, if there are to be any more. And there ought to be, of course, even if the public prefers film and television, simply because the live theatre is still both parent and nurse of all dramatic entertainment, for it is in the live theatre, and only there, that authors, directors, players, face the audience waiting to enjoy our unique experience.

Let us return to the dramatist who is busy with his play about the Jones family. We have seen that he will have to work on two levels of the mind more or less simultaneously. On one of

these, as we know, he is entirely concerned with these Joneses, their characters, their relationships, their varying fortunes, and with this we have nothing to do, except to add that he cannot know too much about the Joneses. Indeed, in order to be able to write one good play about them, he ought to know enough to write ten plays about them. It is both this breadth and depth of knowledge that are clearly absent from plays that are unsatisfactory, though well contrived. But the relation between the dramatist and his Joneses is not our business here. What immediately concerns us is his work on the other level, that of theatrical presentation. As we have seen, he can choose one of several different theatrical conventions to work in, an advantage he has over dramatists in most previous ages. But we must not imagine him, if he is a good dramatist, collecting, so to speak, a lot of Jones material and then deciding what dramatic form he will give it. Good plays are never written like that. He will see the Jones family from the beginning in terms of the particular convention, form, style, he prefers to use. The dramatist does not press a lot of human stuff into a dramatic mould. His matter and form have a reciprocal dynamic relationship, like that, we imagine, of body and soul. He is creating character at the very moment he is also writing parts for his actors and actresses. There is a two-way traffic between the two levels, between the imaginary and imaginative life within the play and the theatrical presentation of that life, what belongs to the stage; so that, as I said before, life is brought to the theatre, and the theatre brought to life.

Two-way Traffic

It is, I think, difficult for people who do not work in the theatre to understand this two-way traffic; they imagine it is all one-way, from life to the theatre, from the Joneses to what will happen on the stage. But I am sure any good dramatist will agree with me that successful creation is never one-way like this, that it represents a co-operation, or a two-way traffic, between both levels; so that while, as anybody can see, a relationship between two characters can suggest a stage situation, it is also true that a stage situation can uncover a relationship between two characters. In short, the true dramatist cannot help thinking of his Jones family from the first in terms of the stage on which he must ultimately present them. And this does not mean that he falsifies them, although he might. What it does mean—and this is why he succeeds—is that he sees them as he intends the audience to see them. And he succeeds because he creates on the two levels on which his audience must respond.

On this second level of theatrical presentation, of stage technique and skills, contrivance and convention, you cannot have everything. If you are writing in verse, you cannot be writing in prose. If the characters are stockbrokers, they cannot behave and talk like troubadours. If the action must be fast, then it cannot at the same time be slow. Certain things cancel out other things. The point, made like this, seems so obvious that it does not seem worth making. Yet it is a fact that intelligent writers on the theatre are always missing it. They are always asking dramatists for the impossible. They will not realise that every theatrical convention, all the work on this level we are discussing, has its particular virtues and defects, and that although the experienced dramatist will try to minimise the defects while exploiting the virtues, the limitations of the chosen form and style must be accepted.

Do you want an example? Here is one. Would you like a play in which the action tightly unwinds like a coiled spring and every single speech develops the situation, but a play, too, in which the characters are all created and exhibited in the round and are if anything larger than life? Yes, you would. So would I. And it can't be done, just because large characters in the round need plenty of space and plenty of time to display themselves, and this means a certain looseness of construction, which immediately rules out any tight economical handling, any action uncoiling like a spring. Take your choice, but do not ask for both at once.

We arrive at a greater confusion still, in which hardly anybody seems to know what he is talking about, when we come to consider the question of poetry in the theatre. In my first talk I pointed out that this subject seems to exist in a permanent muddle here just because our greatest poet and our greatest dramatist happen to be one and the same man, Shakespeare. This en-

courages critics to tell us that all we need to do to save the theatre, make it glorious again, is to bring back the poets. They find it convenient to forget that Yeats, to my mind the greatest poet writing in English of this century, spent a great deal of his time in the theatre, was more intimately concerned with a theatre than most poets will now ever find it possible to be, but these critics do not implore us to begin reviving the many plays that Yeats left us. They would be the first to point out their faults if we did. T. S. Eliot has made what seems to me a very gallant attempt to write contemporary poetic drama, not altogether without success, but clearly, to my mind, having to sacrifice too much, flattening his poetry and at the same time over-simplifying both character and action.

You cannot, you see, have everything. If, for example, you want the contemporary poet to retain his allusive and complex imagery and the intricacies of his thought and feeling—and it is for these he is celebrated and admired—then how is he to write dramatic dialogue that can be immediately understood by an audience? Again, one lively American critic has told us he wants poetic drama not only for its verbal splendour but also because it moves with a speed that plodding realistic prose drama cannot begin to achieve. But in fact it is only in certain situations, of great emotional intensity, that verse is the better dramatic medium; and at other times, dealing with situations that this critic would demand in a play about our own age, it tends to make very slow work, heavy weather indeed, of scenes that a prose realist would handle easily and economically. You can of course have the high spots in verse, and the ordinary scenes in realistic prose, but so far this blend of two very different conventions has not worked well.

I am not going to discuss the dramatist's technical problems here, for our final broadcast in this series will be itself a discussion programme, in which, I hope, the younger dramatists taking part will mention these problems. Here I prefer to make a final point that is in itself a sort of warning to listeners beginning to write plays. Just now our younger dramatic critics seem to be passionately concerned with a play's dialogue and with nothing else in it. They appear to believe that a heightened or unusual quality of dialogue is sufficient by itself, even though everything else in the piece is inferior or dubious, to lift a play into the highest class. I believe this to be wrong. I must confess I do not myself much admire some of the dialogue these critics praise so enthusiastically, notably that unpleasing mixture of excessive slangy violence with unreal, super-literary high-falutin found now in so many American plays. True, most of our English realistic plays contain a great deal of flat dialogue, but that is because the English life they present also contains a great deal of flat dialogue; and in this respect the English dramatist is much worse off than his Irish, American, and French colleagues. The English hate making a scene; but the dramatist *has* to make a scene.

I will end now by warning young writers that although plays are written in dialogue, that dialogue must be spoken by characters of unusual quality too, and those characters must be involved in an action that seems to us significant and that, if possible and without obtrusive symbolism, makes us feel that it casts a long shadow. On one level a play must be satisfying strictly as a play, and on the other level it must be disturbing, stimulating, inspiring, as an image of life. In my next talk I shall discuss the relation between the dramatist and his fellow artists in the theatre.—*Network Three*

Aldous Huxley in London

By SEWELL STOKES

LAST August, on a warm Sunday afternoon, I walked with some difficulty through Hyde Park: from the Serpentine to Marble Arch. I say with some difficulty, because so thickly was the grass spread with people lying in the sunshine that I had to step carefully to avoid treading on them. Not that I think they would have noticed. Most of them were in what you might call an affectionate mood. Quite a few of them were fondly embracing each other—sublimely unconscious of the passers-by. And watching this amorous spectacle I was reminded of Aldous Huxley.

My mind went back to an afternoon in the late 'twenties—or it may have been the early 'thirties—when I strolled with Mr. Huxley through the streets of London towards his club, which was the Athenaeum. Huxley was in a despondent mood, which I attempted to lighten by making bright conversation. I mentioned one or two other authors I had recently met; among them Bernard Shaw, with whom I had had tea at his flat in Whitehall Court: 'Mr. Shaw was in the best of health', I said.

'Was he?' said Huxley. 'Tell me, when you were with Shaw did he make a point of showing you busts and pictures of himself?' I admitted that this was precisely what he had done. Which seemed to exasperate my companion. 'I simply cannot understand it', he exclaimed. 'Shaw insists on showing them to everyone who enters that theatre of his. Why?' I was unable to think of a good answer, so I changed authors: 'Now Galsworthy', I said, 'was telling me the other day how greatly he admired your work. Do you admire his?'

'No, I do not', was the firm reply; and for some seconds we continued our way in silence: Huxley like a wistful tulip whose head rests too heavily on its stalk; myself trotting beside him like a humble weed. Then I brought up the subject of modern novelists. I wanted to learn what Huxley, as a novelist who himself was enjoying a considerable vogue, had to say of his contemporaries. The conversation went something like this:

'Have you read Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*?' I asked.

'I have read it, and it made me feel quite old. It was about a world I do not know, another generation, so different from my own. It made me aware of the terrible *foreignness* of time'.

'How do you feel about D. H. Lawrence?'

'Poor Lawrence! So many readers are afraid even to approach his work. Apart altogether from what he has written, his name frightens them'.

Next I drew him on the subject of women novelists and he said: 'The only woman who seems to be doing anything is Sarah Gertrude Millin, the South African novelist. She can write'.

'And Virginia Woolf?' I asked.

'Oh, Virginia has a lovely sense of words, but her characters are all observed at a distance, through a mist; she never seems able to touch them with her fingers, does she?'

At that time I myself was rather excited by the American writer, Theodore Dreiser. So I came out with his name. When he heard it Huxley regarded me solemnly through his horn-rimmed glasses. I wondered what he would say. And he said: 'I'm sure Dreiser is very good. But as he simply can't write, I simply can't read him'.



Aldous Huxley as a young man

I was becoming depressed, a little. So to introduce a more cheerful note I mentioned *Point Counter Point*, Huxley's own novel, which just then was being discussed everywhere. I knew many authors thoroughly enjoyed talking about what they had written themselves. But this author happened not to be one of them. All I could get him to say was that the novel had taken him a year to write: 'It could have gone on for ever', he said. 'But I had to knock it on the head at some point or other. Once my books are finished they're of no interest to me. It's like putting them on the fire'.

Matters were not much improved when we reached the Athenaeum. This particular member showed little reverence for his club. No sooner had we entered the venerable place than he pointed to some chairs bearing labels which proclaimed them to be antiques and therefore out of use. 'You see', he said, a trifle acidly, 'we're not allowed to put our bottoms where the august great once put theirs'; and with that he sank into an armchair, from the depths of which he then proceeded to lament the sad state in which he found England.

Where Is Merrie England?—

At this time Huxley was living in Paris. He had come over on a visit, half suspecting that his native land no longer held much appeal for him: and this suspicion he had now confirmed. As he spoke, to me his voice was full of a calm despair. 'Merrie England!' he said, shaking his head, 'what has become of it? And London? I am completely bewildered, at a loss to understand it; the people, the way they live...'. He paused, with his eyes closed, and then went on: 'The England that I thought I knew has so completely changed that for me it has become a strange country. I can make nothing of it; the harsh music, the blatant vulgarity, the Talkies... It really is incredible!'

He looked so forlorn in his disillusionment—like a lost, rather impatient child. But it struck me that he might be allowing his imagination to run away with him; that his judgement was more the result of reflection than of practical experience. And I was about to tell him so. But I am glad I did not: because his next words showed me plainly that he had taken the trouble to find out for himself how things were.

'I went the other day', he said, 'to a restaurant in the Tottenham Court Road, and what I saw there absolutely appalled me. The gaudy magnificence... The hideous mural decorations... I'm afraid that beside such gilt and marble splendours poor old Buckingham Palace, which I visited some time ago, would look positively shabby. Its tattered silks and faded tapestries certainly wouldn't impress the hordes of people I saw eating. They'd scorn them. And from this restaurant I went to a dance-hall annexed to a super cinema... And what I saw there...'

What Huxley had seen at the dance-hall was another horde of people whose psychology he found it impossible to understand. 'Crowds of them were dancing', he said, 'dancing extremely badly too, without any grace at all. Why they'd come there, where they'd come from, God knows'. I suggested that they might have come from the East End. But this Huxley refused to believe. 'They weren't alive enough for that', he said. 'What so distressed me about them was their apparent weariness. None of them seemed in the least happy, yet presumably they'd paid their three-and-sixpence to have a good time. No, they were horribly restrained, unable to let themselves go, bored...'

I knew exactly what he meant. I had seen those dancers myself who looked more like animated dummies than live human beings, as they drifted listlessly round the room. 'Why do you think it is that they appear so lethargic?', I asked him. And Huxley said: 'I think it's all the fault of that public school tradition, which has been the ruin of the English masses. Traditions, the right ones, are well enough in their place, but by the time they've seeped through to the people who have never been near a public school, they succeed only in making those people behave unnaturally'.

Then he spoke of the contrast between the dancers he had seen in Paris, and the ones in London: 'In Paris the dancers I watch are happy because they're natural. In London I've seen no natural people... Yes I have though', he exclaimed suddenly, 'at a café in Piccadilly I actually saw an affectionate couple biting each other's necks, in full view of everybody. I thought each moment a

waiter would interfere, but he didn't. It was the only sign of life in the whole place, and I was thankful for it'.

It struck me that if all the customers in that Piccadilly café had chosen to bite each other's necks, the sight might not have been a very pretty one. But I did not say so, because I understood what Huxley had in mind. He was regretting the loss of that roistering spirit which we are told was so prevalent in Shakespeare's day and which to some extent continued up to the end of the last century: although one has to remember that in those days a quiet home life, with the family gathered together, its members often diligently occupied, was also a permanent feature of the social scene. This I did point out to Huxley. And it made him if anything even more gloomy. For now he was able to lament not only the disappearance of uninhibited revellers but also the disappearance of domestic bliss.

'Nobody, nowadays, is any longer encouraged to stay at home', he said—and his usually calm voice gave way to a burst of indignation. 'Every day the newspapers, to satisfy their advertisers, tell the people to leave their homes and go to restaurants, to dance-halls, to theatres and to cinemas. The last thing they must do is to stay at home quietly and think a little'. For a moment he was silent, deep in thought himself. Then he said: 'Why, things have reached such a state that by the average Englishman the word "highbrow", implying an intellectually inclined person, is actually used as a term of reproach'.

By this time I had decided that Huxley was not to be moved from his pessimistic outlook. In a way he might even be enjoying it, I thought. So, to encourage his enjoyment, I brought up the one subject absolutely guaranteed, at any time, to plunge almost everyone into a fit of despair: the state of the English theatre.

'Where is the theatre?' he asked. 'What has become of the music-hall? And of the circus? There's nothing left to go and see. Once I went to the theatre to be stimulated by a play; to a music-hall to watch real artists; and to a circus to see performers do the skilful tricks I couldn't do myself. But now, as you'd know if you'd been a dramatic critic as I have, the plays aren't worth sitting through. One would be ashamed to have written most of them. And all one hears inside a music-hall nowadays is the same old jazz band one hears outside it. Nobody, it seems, wants any longer to watch an artist like Little Tich—or Marie Lloyd. No, they prefer that awful band'.

—Gone with Marie Lloyd?

Huxley really loved the music-hall, which to him had been a part of the England he had once known and appreciated. And Little Tich, the comedian with the artful expression and shoes a yard long, had been one of his favourites. He saw in his death the loss of a great artist. 'Yet', he said, 'his death was almost completely obscured by that of an ex-Prime Minister who happened to die at the same time. As for Marie Lloyd, that glorious Shakespearean creature, she was I'm convinced of it the last of Merrie England'.

Shortly after having made that statement, Huxley left England for good. This could only have upset many of his friends. It did not upset a woman to whom I mentioned the sad loss when I was having tea with her at the House of Commons. This was Mary Agnes Hamilton, who was then a Member of Parliament. She said: 'I've no patience with people who grumble at the state England is in and then just leave her to it... The cotton industry now badly needs men to take it seriously, to throw themselves into it body and soul...'

I doubt if Aldous Huxley could have done much to assist the cotton industry just then, or at any other time. But it did occur to me, walking through Hyde Park last August that he might conceivably now change his mind about Merrie England: might, perhaps, even have seen in the spectacle of all of those ladies and gentlemen lying on the grass a revival of the natural behaviour whose loss he once bitterly lamented. Admittedly I did not see any of the couples on the grass actually bite each other. But that may well have been because I did not look too closely. And I am absolutely certain that if Huxley were to visit any of our modern dance-halls when 'rock-'n'-roll' is in session, he could not describe the dancers as being horribly restrained, unable to let themselves go, or bored. In fact I think he would heartily applaud them.—*Home Service*

A Polish View of Joseph Conrad

By PRZEMYSŁAW MROCZKOWSKI

CAN we risk trying to appraise what is alive for us today in Conrad's work?

The risk is a real one, for it implies, among other things, that the speaker pretends to know the essential characteristics of his own time. On other occasions he would think these ascertainable only by historians generations hence. The critic stands on the platform he has thus erected for himself: he is firm in pointing out what it was that the preceding generation over- or under-emphasised—or he is amused at their shortsightedness; and the firmer he is, or the more amused, the graver, of course, his danger. Is not mutual patronising one of the stock motifs of human comedy, and will not the fun poked at our self-assurance in the year, say, 2,000, be a shade deeper?

The worry increases if we remember that Conrad, though not a humorous writer, would not have been unaware of the irony thus stratified in the course of history. Would he not, in particular, classify us with those who 'can feel young enough to have strong opinions about others'? Would not a bitter smile appear on his lips, followed by a disillusioned shaking of his head? Perhaps it would, but once we are aware of the human comedy always going on, or of the dangers of commitment, once we know to what extent patronising may be mutual, there may be no stopping the process. We can imagine a poet chuckling at our estimate of him. Why could we not, in our turn, chuckle at his chuckling? We are right on the border of a vicious circle, and such things must be stopped at once. Are scepticism and caution really the last words of wisdom?

Here I am, then, inescapably outlining our view of Conrad, measuring our distance from him, and it is just as well that I should have begun with the question of his cultivated detachment and partial scepticism. We must, of course, strongly emphasise the necessary qualification, based on the writer's frequently heroic sense of duty: but scepticism there undoubtedly is. A Marlowe, for all his humane and human feelings, his genuine friendship, his deep awe in face of the mortal lot, still feels it expected of him to sigh—in this, I think, a not unfaithful representative of his creator—not only over the ardent life-hopes of young people, but apparently over their conviction that they can make sense of life at all.

We may experience difficulties no less trying, doubts no less acute, in our account of the universe than Conrad's generation did: in fact, our difficulties are rather more numerous and harassing. Yet as a rule we seem to be less frequently ready to adopt a posture of polite detachment. Some among us have again found it possible to commit themselves to an unconditional acceptance of a coherent and beneficent explanation of the universe; others have made of their very difficulties a programme of action: not content with doubt, they have adopted stark negation and derived from it social and economic schemes and a new type of humanism. Christianity has acquired new vigour in thinking and action; refusal to embrace Christianity has adopted some of its ambitions and a number of musing agnostics have become militant atheists.

So the first of the points on which Conrad appears to us dated is in the atmosphere of comfortable and philosophically abstemious after-dinner gatherings, wrapped in cigar smoke, into which some of his stories of human endeavour were sinking. Some of us are very much aware of our estrangement from the smooth, orderly,

guarded existence which enframes Conrad's stories of the high seas. On his return from harrowing experiences a sailor will go to visit placid, elderly aunts, probably carefully tending their rose gardens. Retired majors will invite him to studied meals. The unshaken gradation of social classes will maintain him with due respect at their all-but-top level. All that, if not quite so much in England, certainly on the Continent and especially in some parts of it, is gone. We have become more hurried, more gregarious, more immediately beset by this omnipresent giant called Social Aspect, by petty everyday cares. We must admit that if our sensibility is more squeamish it is not therefore necessarily more refined: but where the sensibility is refined, as in artists, it would take other, more straightforward forms.

Another point where we have moved away from the mood of Conrad's books concerns something that would seem the opposite of scepticism, though it not infrequently co-habits the same souls: let us simply call it 'romanticism'. (It is a familiar fact that romantic ecstasy and mockery directed against it have repeatedly been neighbours in poetry—witness Chaucer, Byron, or Musset.) The most obvious form of this romantic exaltation may be seen in the attitude of Jim, of which so much belongs to the substance of the story, even if the author himself has devised means of not committing himself to it. The author of *Heart of Darkness* shows further traces of the attitude in his words about women who should be 'kept out of it'—meaning the less delicate side of life. The author of *Karain* displays romantic fatalism in the story of a dark-skinned lover who loses the bride he had won at the cost of forsaking his brother in danger.

If there was a way of looking at life, traditionally associated with the country from which Conrad came, it was the one

I have just described. It was the attitude which sent so many Polish cavalry officers on despairing charges; bade them stake all that was dearest to them on one, usually hopeless, enterprise, exposed their betrothed to life-long expectations of the beloved man's return. It was the way of mind which sent the best among Polish soldiers into the ranks of the '63 insurrection, which led Conrad's parents to ruin, which once more bade so many among the best in the nation stand on the barricades of Warsaw in 1944.

It is difficult to know to what extent a change in this attitude may have a more lasting character than similar earlier changes, but it is fairly generally agreed that a change has now come. At the expense of unimaginably appalling lessons, Conrad's countrymen are today not, or at least are to a less degree, romantic; so are, in a proportionate degree, Europeans in general. Up to a point all human characteristics may be found in any generation, but it has not been in vain that such an amount of ridicule has been thrown at those silhouettes once so popular in Byron's or Mickiewicz's times, wrapped in black mantles, their hair impressively dishevelled. Most of our contemporaries do rather take pride in considering themselves 'hardheaded', 'realistic', 'disillusioned', and seem to do so more frequently than two generations ago.

We may therefore be (and I think we are) less prepared to admire things in some ways undeniably admirable; accounts of heroes that are almost desperados, the medieval type of *courtoisie*, stories about irreparable mistakes. Even Conrad's rich, opalescent flow of phrase, his masterly descriptions, with their masterly



Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)

Hulton Picture Library

placing in the narrative, his 'language so obviously and opulently beautiful', are partly wasted on a *generatio pessima*, nervous, exhausted, fear-ridden, and violent. The same is true of the mere length of his descriptions and the patient preparing of effects of which the American critic Reilly so convincingly wrote. We certainly want, on the whole, more action, more 'go'. Our notion of plot in a novel involves probably more 'outward' happenings, as our notion of mystery does that of more immediate thrill.

But after we have done our best to make conscious in ourselves all the discrepancies between Conrad's art and the contemporary type of receptiveness, there can be little doubt which aspects of his art have lost nothing of their power.

A Sense of Drama

Can there be a great narrative artist who does not convey the sense of drama in life? And have there been many of such artists to surpass Conrad in this respect? Do we not feel in his work the opposition of forces that appear to struggle or play for the individual soul? Are we not made to acquiesce as we are shown the long alleys of consequences attending upon a human individual's decision? Do there not stand before us, in those pages, even if 'ornamented' in what would be now a slightly old-fashioned way, perennial powers of creation and destruction, in an ever-fresh conflict? At the end of his allotted life span, Tuan Jim, who is so convincingly generous, even if fallible, is faced by his opposite number, whom I should still call convincing even if I were forced to admit that he was slightly melodramatic. Two principles are opposed. Heyst, at the end of his allotted span, is faced by a trio of blackguards, standing in dramatic opposition to his loving kindness. It may be noticed in passing that they, as well as Schomberg, stand in dramatic opposition to something else at the same time: Heyst's attempt at remaining detached, Harold Pyle in *The Quiet American* (himself not a villain) shows, in an idiom more congenial to our mood, the same clash. But although the writings of Graham Greene (an author so much influenced by Conrad) set a key better adapted to our ears, it is useful to note that Conrad knew the same problem.

Drama means, of course, not only the struggle or the play of opposing principles; it means also a certain momentousness of every minute, responsibility for decisions. There are other things in Conrad which the past two generations have not dimmed or have dimmed but very little. Alongside the sense of drama in life there is the notion that in the course of conflicts and the continual choosing involved one is being tested and tried. Who is a fake, and who has in him the 'genuine stuff'? The main question in *Piers Plowman* and in *King Lear* remained the main question in so much of Conrad's output. And it involves, at the same time, that continual probing which our times have called psychology. Into those vertiginous depths Conrad looked unflinching.

Whether you are convinced that you know who is testing you, or whether you think that the testing goes on in the blind void of a purposeless universe that yet can distil some beauty, it is the function of a true artist to convey the feeling of mystery that the spectacle of life creates in us: Conrad had it in plenty, and it is again a timeless thing. Doing justice to the visible universe meant showing that its visible pattern is a maze. This may mean using less lofty terminology than 'mystery' but it certainly corresponds to something real and is possibly nearer to the feelings of that common idol of our time, the 'common man'. The 'common man' in Conrad's native country, characteristically lacking philosophical approach, tries to cope with the puzzle as best he can; he just tries somehow to find his way in the maze. The 'common man' in Conrad's adopted country, equally unable or unwilling to grasp why life should be a matter for wonder, laughs at what he does not comprehend. Either of those attitudes would be alien to the delicate and complex artist who united in himself the two nations. All that he allows himself to do is to state what he sees of the strange and sometimes solemn spectacle.

A discussion of the means chosen would easily take many hours. We may only point to a few.

It is by now a commonplace of criticism to stress the paradox that the sea is not an essential element in Conrad's art: he is concerned with that still more solemn thing, human destiny, and the sea counts in so far as it brings out the noteworthy, the

tragic, or the futile in human vicissitudes. He stressed this fact himself. But nonetheless one cannot help remarking, quite simply, that the sea, or what he makes us feel about the sea, is there, after all, and that even if it is only the means to an end we enjoy the means. Conrad, the son of a continental nation, remains the first serious artist in English literature to have properly seen the ocean, and if we speak of what is perennial in the author of *Youth*, is not the sea the first thing that comes to mind, capricious, yet oddly faithful, delicate, and endlessly vast?

And some of the style is like the sea: it encircles the events, charms by its sound and its play of ideas. I said that some of it appears dated, but I must complete that comment by saying that many of his descriptions, and even his digressions, remain as beautiful as ever.

From the many particular kinds of technique that belong to Conrad's style, there is one that is less likely to appear *périmé* than any other—I mean his choice of representative details, a facet of something that is at the heart of all art: selection. Conrad knew how to choose, and if we had not noticed it ourselves Muriel Bradbrook's fine little book reminded us of it in 1941. But there is one way of describing it which she did not use, and which Conrad himself would not have used. Let us look at a passage describing the sleeping pilgrims on board *Patna* before the dramatic crash, asking ourselves whether we are not familiar with a modern invention providing a name for what the writer did.

... In the blurred circles of light thrown down and trembling slightly to the unceasing vibration of the ship appeared a chin upturned, two closed eyelids, a dark hand with silver rings, a meagre limb draped in a torn covering, a head bent back, a naked foot, a throat bared and stretched as if offering itself to the knife.

The question I want to ask is simply: 'Isn't this very like the movement of a film camera?'

The same impression is reinforced a page later, when Conrad indirectly conveys to us the idea that the ship is lost in the immensity of the ocean, by referring to the captain's chart and the marks upon it:

The sheet of paper portraying the depths of the sea presented a shiny surface as level and smooth as the glimmering surface of the waters. Parallel rulers with a pair of dividers reposed on it, the ship's position at last noon was marked with a black cross, and the straight pencil line drawn firmly as far as Perim figured the course of the ship—the path of souls towards the holy place, the promise of salvation, the reward of eternal life—while the pencil with its sharp end touching the Somali coast lay round and still like a naked ship's spar floating in the pool of a sheltered dock.

I said at the beginning of this talk that some things in the setting of Conrad's fiction had become unfamiliar to his readers. I have just mentioned a detail which is very familiar indeed. I am not forgetting that the kind of light in which we are able to see a work is ultimately secondary, though it may be important. Whatever the changing colours of the floodlights or angles from which they are operated, it is the statue they show that matters primarily throughout: partly by what living eyes can see, partly by its very incompleteness, and partly by the primeval blackness from which it emerges.—*Third Programme*

The Faithful

They find us fast in cages and unlock
The imperceptible door which would not move
For our despairing songs and beating wings;
And we would never leave them; on their wrists,
Tame and without the falcon's hunting-hunger,
We would be carried by their towering love,
Or hide ourselves in their protecting coats;

But these that saw the door's small fastening,
Will not be blind to cords as strong as chains;
Their love is true that flings us from its care
Into the liberty of boundless air.

I. R. ORTON

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS



Three examples from the Royal Photographic Society's autumn exhibition of nature photographs which is on view at 16 Princes Gate, London, S.W.7, until December 20:

Above: 'Otter—swimming', by Horst Dischner

Right: 'Eastern Water Dragon', by E. R. Rotherham

Below: 'Mallard', by C. A. Vaucher

The exhibition will move to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter, on January 6, where it will remain until February 1



Will Harvey of Gloucestershire

By LEONARD CLARK

THE name could be that of a character in a Shakespeare play—very English and very rural. Will Harvey was both of these. When he died this summer, in his seventieth year, England lost something more than a good poet; she lost a great lover. And he loved one county as much as he loved poetry, which is saying a great deal: Gloucestershire and poetry were, for him, the same thing, and there were a few acres in that romantic county which were especially holy to him. These lay in their simplicity around the village of Minsterworth, a few miles downstream from the cathedral city of Gloucester. Here he spent his youth within sight of its orchards, cottages, meadows, and the River Severn. And here, in its ancient churchyard, he is buried.

I first met Will Harvey in my last year at school. I was barely seventeen and he was twice my age. I had begun to write—and to have printed in the local newspaper—what my grandfather called ‘them little bits of verses’. One day someone told me that the author of ‘Ducks’, a poem I knew by heart, lived only a few miles away. I could hardly believe it. I had pictured the writer of that poem living in some remote poet’s arcadia. I wrote to him, told him I wrote poetry, and asked if I could come and see him. By return came a creased postcard with a sepia picture of the Severn Bore on one side, and on the other, in jagged handwriting, the magic words: ‘Come next Saturday. Have just seen Parker take eight for forty’. The Gloucestershire left arm spin bowler was then at the height of his magnificent, destructive powers.

The Cricketing Poet

Saturday came. With my notebook of original poems tucked safely into my pocket I cycled, in a dream, all the way downhill to the charmed village of Minsterworth. I kept on reminding myself that I was going to see a real poet. I had once seen a real general and a real live lord, and had not been disappointed. I got to Minsterworth half an hour too soon, wandered about a bit rather aimlessly and then knocked at the door of the early-Victorian house where Will Harvey lived. The great man was not at home. ‘Would you wait for him in the parlour?’, asked his sister. ‘He’s out playing cricket’. ‘Oh, could I go and see him?’, I ventured, rising eagerly from my chair. ‘Well, he’s at Gloucester’. I sat down again. Gloucester was three or four miles away.

Four o’clock came, and no poet. By five we had finished tea. At six, having nothing more to talk about, I thought it was time to go home. Mother would be wondering if I had been drowned in the Severn. About a quarter past he arrived, still in his ‘whites’ and breathless with apologies. He had forgotten to tell me about the match. I later learned from a hypnotised eye-witness that he had scattered the spectators with some terrific off-drives, and almost maimed a fielder for life who had been so foolish as to get in the way of a wicked square cut.

Before I left that welcoming household he had glanced at my notebook of poems, said a few kind words about them, toasted our muse in cider, and invited me to come again the following Sunday. ‘And there’ll be no cricket match this time, I promise you, though we’ve got our own variety of cricket here—in this house’. They had indeed got a devilish variation of cricket in that house and it had taken a poet to invent it, too. You played Harvey’s cricket in a long, narrow court, no more than four feet wide, at the back of the house. There were no wickets but only a high wall behind you. The courtyard also had a roof which covered it for half its length. The ball was a hard one, something in size between a cricket and a fives ball. You hit this, or at least tried to hit it, with a shortened hockey stick. You were out if the ball hit the wall three times. Every visitor to that house who had any interest in cricket was pressed to play that version of the game, whatever the season of the year. It had a long list

of distinguished casualties, including two cathedral organists (bumps on the head), four county batsmen (broken knuckles), and many of the local farmers (normally, black eyes). I begin to ache again when I think of my wild efforts at that savage game.

A Superb Mimic

Will Harvey described himself as ‘a thickset, dark-haired dreamy little man, uncouth to see’. He certainly had, except on special occasions, a fine disregard for clothes and, when among his own familiars, of razors also. I remember him best of all ambling along the country roads, wearing a rather stained navy blue suit, a battered trilby hat planted firmly on his head, gold-rimmed spectacles on nose, and cigarette between tobacco-stained fingers. He was forthright in speech (his expletives were often Chaucerian), he was as tender-hearted as a kitten, humorous, eager, with great powers of endurance, quietly but deeply religious. He was a superb mimic with the kind of expressive face which would have earned him a fortune on the music halls. I can hear his laughter now, and see him, convulsed, taking off his spectacles to wipe the tears of merriment from their lenses with his sleeve. His conversation was as gay as his laughter and as dashing as his cricket.

Until I left Gloucestershire I saw a great deal of Will Harvey. I often used to walk with him to my home from the village of Littledean a mile or so away in the valley. This was always on Fridays when the Petty Sessions were held, for Will was a solicitor and in great demand as an advocate. He rarely prosecuted. Everybody in trouble went to him.

He talked little about himself, though much about books, cricket, and the Cotswold villages—just what I needed at that stage of my life. But one day, sitting comfortably in the snug of a quiet pub by Severnside, he told me something about his life, of how he admired Ivor Gurney, that tragic figure of a musician and poet, of how miserable he was when he had to leave his home to serve his articles as a solicitor in Swindon, of how he first began to write poems. As we were chatting, Will began to sing Gurney’s rousing setting of Masfield’s ‘*Captain Stratton’s Fancy*’. ‘Of course’, he said, ‘when the war broke out I enlisted at once in the 5th Gloucesters and wrote most of the poems of my first book in the trenches’.

I once asked him, soon after first meeting him, about a huge walking stick he sometimes carried about with him. He chuckled and said it was ‘a medal winner’. I was mystified until he explained that, in 1915, he had won the D.C.M. for ‘what they said was conspicuous gallantry’. Not long after that conversation I came across the citation as it appeared in *The London Gazette*: ‘He and another N.C.O. went out to reconnoitre. In advancing they encountered a hostile listening post. Corporal Knight at once shot one of the enemy, and, with Lance-Corporal Harvey, rushed the post, shooting two others, and assistance arriving, the enemy fled. Lance-Corporal Harvey pursued, felling one of the retreating Germans with a bludgeon’. A funny weapon, I always thought, for such a gentle man until I began to think of cricket played with a hockey stick, and his own performances in the field with the bat.

Writing in Captivity

I knew, too, that he had been a prisoner of war for two years in seven different camps; he must have been a bit of a handful. He wrote some of his best poems in captivity, and showed me the soiled little exercise book in which they had been scrawled and which the Germans allowed him to send home to be published. The war over, Will went into practice again and eventually landed up in the Forest of Dean. There, among the oaks and the miners, he stayed for the rest of his life.

The Foresters loved every inch of him. They knew he was a good lawyer, they admired his cricket, but most of all they enjoyed his company. A miner once said to me, 'Mr. Harvey, he's like a lovely, wicked old gnome. I only 'as to look at him to bust out laughing'. And Will Harvey loved them, and their cottages, and pigs, and skittle alleys, and male-voice choirs. He drank with them in their pubs, listened to their troubles, told them his, and, though they did not always know it, gave them free lessons in law and literature. He made some remarkable broadcasts about the Foresters and their part of England. In fact, he became one of them. He died a poor man as the world understands riches, but how many he enriched with his simple goodness and fidelity.

Will Harvey opened the magic casements of poetry for me. He bequeathed to me his special joy in Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Hardy. And he fanned my enthusiasm for cricket and taught me some of its finer points. He was a wonderful example, too, of a man who learned, through bitter experience, to be contented with his lot, though life had given him many disappointments.

The last time I saw Will Harvey was on a serene autumn day in his Forest village of Yorkley. We walked in the woods during the golden afternoon, taking with us his two young children, a sparkling, excited little boy and a shy, elfin girl. The acorns and beech nuts were strewn on the sun-patched turf. A few late foxgloves still flared in the browning bracken. One or two birds sang as if summer were still lingering. At every turn we saw the grey forest sheep nibbling the grass. The two children ran on, in and out of the undergrowth. Will and I walked and talked and sang. We sang the old folk songs and some of the Irish melodies, he

with his soft, pleasant baritone and me with my uncertain tenor.

The evening mists began to fall so we went back through the ghostly trees to his home and ate a late tea by the light of a fire glowing with holly logs. He sat at table with his collar off and the light of the table lamp fell on his stubby fingers. Around us were his books, the remnants of what had once been a fine library. The children were put to bed and Will's Irish wife began to tidy up for the night. He got up and fetched a copy of Shakespeare's sonnets from the top of the dresser and began to read one of them out loud. 'He's got everything', he said, 'and they'll never better him'. Then he closed the smooth-covered book, which had been his companion in captivity, and gave it to me. I still have it, with all his comments scribbled over its pages. Then he quietly bowed his head, looked at me over the top of his spectacles, and put his hand on my shoulder with the words: 'Well, after all I did write "Ducks" and they can't take that from me'.

I said goodnight to Mrs. Harvey and then Will and I went out into the darkness. I don't think we said anything else except the usual goodbyes. I got on the bus which was to take me home, and looked through the back window to catch my last sight of him. There he was, smiling at me and waving his old trilby hat. Then he faded into the Forest night. I never saw Will Harvey again. There were a few letters, a few postcards. I think, perhaps, he never forgave me for leaving Gloucestershire. But Will Harvey, a country character if ever there was one, with a brave, unshackled spirit, wrote the name of poetry on my heart, and for that alone I bless his memory.—*Home Service*

On Collecting Stamps

By KENNETH F. CHAPMAN

IT is possible to build up a stamp collection which is a first-class investment in every sense of the word, one which can be sold, in due course, at a profit. It is also possible to spend large sums of money on stamps and reap the reward of the unwise speculator, that is, a heavy loss on sale. Since few of us like to lose money, let us deal first with how not to invest in stamps.

You may be one of those who have been tempted by advertisements promising a tax-free return on philatelic investment, a form of stamp merchandising which does not find favour with the philatelic press which, therefore, does not accept advertisements from the promoters. Experience shows that most 'philatelic investment brokers'—as these concerns rather grandiloquently describe themselves—are after your money first and foremost, without any regard to the real state of the philatelic market.

One or two instances should make the point clear. When the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh undertook their Commonwealth tour in the winter of 1953-54, several Colonies and Dominions issued stamps to commemorate the occasion. The complete collection was being advertised in advance of issue at about 8s. 6d. in the philatelic press. Another offer, made outside the philatelic press, described the stamps as a unique collection of great historic interest suitable for investment at 20s. per collection—more than twice a price that already showed a fair profit to the dealer. Today's top retail market price of the set is 12s. 6d. A speculator, allowing for a dealer's profit, would be lucky if he obtained 9s. a set for them. The sad thing is that so many non-collectors, having read about the investment possibilities of stamps, took the plunge and boosted the bank balances of the racketeers. I know of one instance where a woman was persuaded to order in advance, and pay for, 250 sets of those royal tour collections at £1 each. When she heard of the price

ruling in the stamp trade she immediately protested, but it was too late. No cash back—just the stamps when they eventually appeared.

Another trap set for the unwary by the investment specialists is to offer complete sets of a new and attractive pictorial colonial issue the moment it appears. For instance, when the Falkland Islands Dependencies issued a long series of ship stamps in 1954, ranging from the ½d. value to the £1—a total face value of 43s.—they were well received. Through the normal new-issue services the set was on general sale at about 50s. to 55s., that is, face value plus a reasonable percentage for service charges and profit. Offers outside the philatelic press described these stamps as a first-class investment. The charge in this case was £4. But these stamps are definitives, that is, on sale indefinitely as the everyday stamps of the Falkland Dependencies and in no sense, short-lived commemoratives. There is every prospect that they will remain on sale for about ten years since there is an unwritten Colonial Office rule that Colonies will not normally change a general issue for that period. To invest in this issue on a large scale, especially at the 'investment' price of £4, is merely to lock up capital at an expensive above-par rate to start with. No dealer will be interested to buy them while current, except possibly at face value or a bit less. He can obtain all he wants through the Crown Agents for a small commission or direct from the Colonial Postmaster at face value plus postal charges.

Speculate, by all means, if you are a gambler—note I say 'speculate' and not 'invest'—but check the prices before you buy. Broadly speaking, it is



Stamp commemorating the royal tour of Australia, issued in February 1954



One of the Falkland Islands Dependencies' 'definitives' of 1954; the ship is *Discovery II*



Seychelles: 45 cents stamp with overprint of 5 cents

fatal to put all your eggs in one philatelic basket. You might conceivably be lucky if you plunge on an issue in short supply and buy it at the starting price—that is, face value, plus possibly a small agent's commission. The difficulty is to get there in time if a stamp, or series of stamps, is in short supply and popular. For instance, the recent 5c. provisional overprint on the 45c. Seychelles was obtained by the people on the spot, who got in on the ground floor. They could make the price, and they did. The face value is about 1d. The overprint was applied locally to stocks of the 45c. value in order to bridge the gap before supplies of a new 5c. stamp, occasioned by changing postal rates, arrived from the printers in Britain. Costly cables went off from every London dealer trying to buy through local agents in the Seychelles. Supplies were strictly rationed, and the overall cost of the stamps by the time they arrived by air mail had become very much greater than one penny per stamp. Prices here started at about 2s. 6d. and steadily climbed to 5s. within a few days, even before anybody in London knew just how many had been issued—an important factor in the final market price of any stamp. Such stamps as these are a chancy market. You may be lucky and you may not.

A Collection that is an Investment

Let us see how to go about building up a collection which really is an investment; but first let us define investment as it applies to stamp collecting. To some people the term has a completely commercial meaning. They want to put down, let us say, £100 and see a regular dividend coming along in the form of increased capital value—rather like a Post Office Savings Bank deposit. Others are content to invest for security of capital without being unduly worried about the return on their money. They could be called the Premium Bond type. Capital is safe but dividend a doubtful quantity.

When it comes to stamps there are those, and you may well be among them, who consider that if they spend something like £100 on their collection and ultimately receive £75 to £80 then it was well worth while. The loss is regarded as a reasonable expenditure on the pleasure the collection has given the owner. The view these reasonable people take is that other hobbies cost money, so why not stamp collecting? I do not blame you if your reaction is: 'Well, that's a poor sort of investment', especially if you are spending as much on stamps as you dare, and have to look to the possibility of realising the collection in the event of stormy financial weather. Right, then how *do* you go about making a collection which will recoup you entirely and, possibly, yield a profit? The answer is to collect intelligently. Do not be a magpie, buying here, there and everywhere, just as attractive-looking stamps take your fancy.

Intelligent collecting means collecting to a plan, and sticking to it. A possibly extreme example was the great J. B. Seymour collection of Great Britain. For over fifty years the late Mr. Seymour collected and studied the stamps of Great Britain only. He made himself a foremost authority on the subject. He often bought scarce varieties as normals, which he was perfectly right in doing for he deserved compensation for the time and study he had put into the collection. Thus, when it was sold it netted something over £60,000—not bad going for a collection of the stamps of one country. What Seymour spent on his collection we shall never know, but I am willing to gamble that it was a very small sum compared with the fortune it netted his family after his death.

Choose Your Country

We cannot all be Seymours, but we can work to a similar plan in a more modest way. Choose a country which takes your fancy and collect it for all you are worth. The more you understand the stamps the better your chances of picking up 'snips', which those who do not understand them will pass on to you as normals. Do not be afraid of dealers. The general stamp dealer, if he is wise—and most of them are—will be delighted that you have made a real find, such as a scarce re-entry or a rare postmark, among his stock. He bought it as a normal in the ordinary course of business and sold it to you at a reasonable profit. The fact that you are one up does not mean he is out of pocket but it does mean that

you will go back to him again. Collect this way and you will fast become a specialist, and in stamp collecting, as in every other activity these days, it is specialists who reap the reward of their studies.

There are no short cuts to philatelic specialisation. You can be immensely helped along the road by buying the existing literature on your speciality but you must also be prepared to study your stamps. That should not be a hardship since you are, presumably, collecting because you like doing it. Choosing a country in which to specialise is largely a matter of personal choice—and the depth of one's purse. A primary necessity is sufficient material to study, and a secondary consideration is whether or not the country in question has been taken up by a great number of specialists already. If it has, the collector may find it difficult to break new ground, and virgin material will be difficult to come by. Nevertheless, there *are* fresh fields to conquer.

Recently I was reading a work on the researches of a collector who had studied intensively the King George VI stamps of Gibraltar. It was amazing how he had dug and delved to account for the multitude of small, but constant, printing flaws on these modern stamps, and how he allocated them to various printings in such a way as to reconstruct the history of the printing and show how the engraved plates had become worn, were repaired and, finally, discarded in favour of new plates, as the impressions from the old became of too low a standard. Such a collection would cost little more than the face value of the stamps, but, once mounted and annotated, becomes a specialised study of considerable value—certainly far in excess of the original outlay. Here indeed was a philatelic investment of real worth.

Cancellations on Common Stamps

The collection of cancellations on common stamps is another fruitful field for specialisation, one which the ever-increasing demand for postal history material makes well worth while. This form of collecting has the great merit of being possible at a low cost since bulk supplies of common used stamps of any of the major stamp-using countries are suitable. Once again, however, some knowledge of what to look for is essential. The postmarks of the larger towns will, of course, predominate in any bulk mixture of the stamps. It is the up-country cancellations used in remote villages and the marks of the travelling post offices, and so on, which are worth hunting for. As these are sorted out, classified and mounted in the collection they acquire a value out of all proportion to the stamps on which they have been struck. Collecting of this nature can lead you into many interesting bypaths. Large-scale maps of the country concerned will have to be studied to locate the places of use, and routes of the travelling post offices can be traced and recorded. The colony of British Guiana provides a good example of this type of collecting. In this case, the travelling post offices are mainly on steamers plying the rivers, and a well arranged chronological collection of the cancellations, picked out of bulk supplies—or singly from exchange club booklets in which they have not been recognised—presents a history of the development of the country and produces a worthwhile philatelic asset.

A word to those collectors who feel they just cannot be bothered to specialise to the degree suggested and merely want to collect on simple lines and enjoy themselves quietly. They too can assemble a collection which will show a profit in due course. Their cue is to take stock of what they already have and set about filling the blanks in sets which lack one or two values, for it is an accepted principle of philatelic trading that a complete set of stamps—or one complete to a given point, say the 2s. 6d. denomination—is always worth more in proportion than is a broken set lacking those 'awkward' values which are in greatest demand. A small collection complete in its several parts is much more saleable than a hotch-potch of stamps which, singly, might well be worth more than the small collection but which do not interest a dealer because he has so much work to do pricing each stamp. Remember, too, that very cheap stamps, such as those which pour off the presses of many mid-European countries, are often made for collectors in the first place. They are fun, many of them, and full of design interest but they are, and always will be, in plentiful supply since that is the object of their being issued.

I cannot resist a word or two about the market tipsters who write regularly in all the independent philatelic journals. The very fact that these articles are published may seem contrary to the claim that the philatelic press sets its face against investment, but there is a clear line to be drawn between investment and speculation. Each of the writers concerned uses a *nom-de-plume* to conceal his identity from the trade, some of whom might otherwise seek to influence the opinions expressed in print. Thus 'W. E. Fynderm' ('we find 'em') masks the identity of a knowledgeable writer in the only British weekly journal devoted to stamp collecting. He writes for the collector who is content with

a single, or perhaps a block of four, of the stamps mentioned in his market commentary, and with extraordinary foresight he advises his readers about stamps which can be expected to rise in value. His opinions are based on a knowledge of the international stamp market. This is important because stamps enjoy a world-wide popularity, and the prices of certain issues in New York, Paris, Brussels, Berne, and elsewhere can affect the British market substantially. It is this very world-wide demand which ensures, among other factors, the steady increase of the values of fine quality stamps, early and modern, which are in constant demand.—*Network Three*

Law in Action

Insurance Claims

By A BARRISTER

EVERY year many thousands of insurance policies are taken out. They cover a wide variety of risks, ranging from fire, burglary, road accidents and other calamities to insurances against rainy holidays and life insurance. Every year thousands of claims are made under such policies, and the great majority are settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. Sometimes, however, a claim fails, and I want here to discuss two of the grounds upon which this may happen.

One ground is a failure to fill up the proposal form correctly; the other is a failure to disclose to the insurance company some fact that ought to be disclosed. These two heads, which for brevity we may call inaccuracy and non-disclosure respectively, often overlap; but in law they are distinct. To avoid being guilty of inaccuracy, the proposer must complete the proposal form with complete accuracy, however irrelevant the questions may seem; to avoid being guilty of non-disclosure, the proposer must act with the utmost good faith, and inform the insurance company of anything he knows that is material to the risk, whether or not they ask him about it. Incidentally, for the sake of clarity, I shall refer to the insurers who undertake the risk as 'the insurance company' even though in some of the cases which I shall cite the insurers were Lloyd's underwriters and not an insurance company.

Mr. Roberts and a Declaration

In a case that was decided last year, a Mr. Roberts made a claim under a policy of insurance indemnifying him against loss resulting from a number of causes, including burglary. The company rejected his claim, and Mr. Roberts brought an action against them.¹

Mr. Roberts' case was that he had suffered a loss by burglary to the amount of £825. The company admitted that this loss had occurred. Their case was that they were entitled to treat the policy as void as a result of Mr. Roberts' failure to disclose the fact that he had suffered loss by burglary on a previous occasion. They argued that the policy which they had issued incorporated by reference a written proposal signed by Mr. Roberts. You are probably familiar with these proposal forms. Sometimes they consist of a series of questions which have to be answered by the person making the proposal; and sometimes they consist of a series of declarations to be made by him. In the present case the latter method had been used. One of the declarations ran as follows: 'I have never sustained a loss in respect of any of the contingencies specified in this proposal except . . .'. And then there was a blank, beside which was a note which said: 'Give date, amount and name of insurers in respect of each loss'. The following statement also appeared in the proposal form: 'This declaration shall be the basis of the contract between me and [the company] . . .'.²

It so happened that about three years earlier Mr. Roberts had sustained a loss by reason of burglary or housebreaking amounting to about £760. He had in fact made a claim against another insurance company in respect of that loss, and the company had

paid up. Unfortunately, Mr. Roberts omitted to mention these facts when he completed the proposal form.

The company defended the action brought by Mr. Roberts on various grounds including both inaccuracy and non-disclosure. First, they contended that the policy was void, because it was issued on the basis that Mr. Roberts had never sustained a previous loss by reason of burglary or housebreaking, whereas in fact he had sustained a previous loss of that kind. Secondly, the company contended that Mr. Roberts had failed to disclose to them a material fact known to him but unknown to them, namely the previous burglary. The learned judge who tried the case gave judgement for the insurance company.

Rule Relating to Non-disclosure

There is nothing remarkable in this decision, which merely applied well-settled principles. But I want for a moment to look more closely at the rule relating to non-disclosure. This duty to disclose material facts applies to all classes of insurance, and the question in every case is whether the fact not disclosed was material to the risk. It does not matter in the least whether the policy-holder, reasonably or otherwise, believed or understood it to be material.

But how, you may ask, does one decide whether a given fact is 'material to the risk'? The answer which the Courts have given is that a fact is material if, upon disclosure, it would have led a reasonable insurance company to decline the risk or to stipulate for a higher premium.² You will see that the test is not what the policy-holder thought was material when he made his proposal, nor again what the particular insurance company thought or would have thought. The standard applied is that of an average, reasonable insurance company.

What happens in practice—and these talks are concerned with the law in action—is this. The insurance company call as a witness an experienced underwriter, or perhaps two experienced underwriters. These gentlemen are asked by counsel who appears for the insurance company what they, as underwriters, would have done if the fact in question had been disclosed to them. If they say 'We would have declined the risk' or 'We would have stipulated for a higher premium', then, if their evidence is accepted, the policy-holder's case is as good as lost.

The law on this point is very strict indeed. If a policy-holder fails to disclose a material fact known to him, but unknown to the insurance company, the company are entitled to repudiate all liability. The hardship to the policy-holder is that however genuinely he thought the undisclosed fact unimportant or immaterial, his claim will fail if by the standard of a reasonable insurance company the fact was material. The whole validity of the policy may depend upon the policy-holder correctly understanding and applying standards which are little known to most citizens. There is no doubt that this is the law; but ought it to be the law?

This question, and several other questions concerning the law of insurance, were considered recently by the Law Reform Com-

¹ *Roberts v. Avon Insurance Co. Ltd.*, [1956] 2 Lloyd's Rep. 240.

² *Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York v. Ontario Metal Products Co. Ltd.*, [1925] A.C.344.

mittee. In their Report² the Committee explained the duty to disclose material facts and continued as follows:

Whether the insuring public at large is aware of this it is difficult to say; but it seems to us to follow from the accepted definition of materiality that a fact may be material to insurers, in the light of the great volume of experience of claims available to them, which would not necessarily appear to a proposer for insurance, however honest and careful, to be one which he ought to disclose.

The Committee came to the conclusion that the following provision could be introduced into the law and that no legal difficulties would arise in its application: 'For the purposes of any contract of insurance no fact should be deemed material unless it would have been considered material by a reasonable insured'.³ This, you will note, proposes to substitute the view of a 'reasonable policy-holder' for that of a 'reasonable insurance company'. The standard to be applied would no longer be that of the average, reasonable insurance company, but that of the average, reasonable policy-holder; and that standard would certainly be less complex and better understood by John Citizen than the present standard.

Does this proposal go far enough? It would be possible for Parliament to go further, and abolish altogether this special duty to disclose material facts—a duty which arises only in the case of insurance contracts and a few other contracts of a rather special nature. But many people think that this would go too far, and that the Committee's proposal is a better solution.

Defence of Inaccuracy

I now turn to the other defence, that of inaccuracy, raised by the insurance company in the recent case that I mentioned. You will recollect that Mr. Roberts had been required to supply detailed information in his proposal form. This is very common; and in practice it usually covers most or all of the ground covered by the duty of disclosure. It is also the usual practice to insert a clause whereby the proposer agrees that the truth of his answers shall be the basis of the contract between him and the company.

The result of such a clause is perfectly clear so far as the law is concerned. If you make an error in the information which you supply, the insurance company are at liberty to repudiate. Take life insurance, for example. The insurance company usually ask for certain details of family history. It matters not that the information given is irrelevant to the risk, and it matters not that you acted honestly and with all due care in answering the questions. If any part of the information which you give is inaccurate, the insurance company can repudiate liability. To take an extreme example, suppose the company asked: 'Did your grandmother ever suffer from measles?' And suppose you answered: 'no', whereas the correct answer would have been 'yes': if the company find out the true position, they are entitled to repudiate all liability under the policy, even though it is obvious that the information could not possibly have affected their decision whether or not to insure your life. That is the law, and for many years lawyers have been asking whether or not it ought to be changed, and, if so, how.

Before trying to find an answer to these questions, let us look at one or two of the earlier cases to see how the rule operates in practice. In one of these⁴ a firm of furniture removers in Glasgow insured a motor lorry against damage by fire and third-party risks. Question 4 in the proposal form was: 'State full address at which the vehicle will usually be garaged'. The answer given was 'Above address', meaning the firm's ordinary place of business in Glasgow. This was inaccurate, as the lorry was usually garaged at a farm on the outskirts of Glasgow.

Some time later the lorry was destroyed by fire at this farm, and the policy-holders claimed payment under the policy. The insurance company refused to pay, and the policy-holders brought an action against them. The fact that an inaccurate answer had been given to a question in the proposal form, although in itself of no materiality whatsoever, was held by a majority of three judges to two in the House of Lords to invalidate the policy of insurance, because the accuracy of the answers had been made a basic condition of the contract.

You will usually find in this country that a judge wishes to decide a case not only according to law but also according to its merits. In this respect it is interesting to note that two of the judges who gave their decisions in favour of the insurance company made it clear that they had little sympathy with the company.⁵

It should not be inferred, however, that insurance companies make a practice of looking for highly technical points to defeat honest claims brought against them. The companies as a whole, and also Lloyd's underwriters, enjoy a high reputation for the prompt way in which they meet claims. But it is important that policy-holders should have legally enforceable rights and not be left to depend upon the benevolence and fair mindedness of insurance companies. After all, mistakes and honest differences of opinion do occur, and not every company recognises precisely the same standards as the great majority.

The 'Temperate' Town Councillor

From the insurance companies' point of view there are often sound reasons for asking a good many detailed questions in the proposal form and for stipulating that the answers shall be the basis of the contract. Take, for example, the following case.⁶ A town councillor of Johnstone, a town in Scotland, applied to an insurance company to effect a policy on his life. He received a printed form of proposal, and the following were among the questions asked: 'Are you temperate in your habits?' to which he answered: 'Temperate'; and 'Have you always been strictly so?' to which he answered: 'Yes'. As usual, there was a declaration below the printed questions, which he signed, to the effect that the foregoing statements were true and that the declaration should be the basis of the contract.

A policy was executed in November, 1881, and only eight months later the town councillor (who in the meantime had been elected provost of Johnstone) died. So far there was nothing remarkable about the case, but what was remarkable was that the doctor who attended him in his last illness certified that the cause of death was 'hepatitis, chronic, four months, congestion of the brain, four days'. Chronic hepatitis is a disease of the liver which is generally, in this climate, produced by excessive drinking over a considerable period.

Little wonder that the insurance company began to enquire rather closely into the late provost's mode of life. They were able to produce a good deal of evidence which hardly supported that gentleman's assertion that he was 'temperate in his habits'. Lord Watson summarised the evidence in his speech in the House of Lords:

It seems to me to be the fair result of the evidence, that the assured was in the habit of taking more drink than was good for him: that he was frequently affected with drink on occasions when all except himself were sober; that his indulgence to excess had become so apparent that several of his friends remonstrated with him on the subject, and that, instead of repudiating the charge, he admitted it and promised amendment. These facts appear to me to be fully proved, and they are, in my opinion, altogether inconsistent with the truth of the assertion that he was, on the 9th of November, 1881, of temperate habits, and had always been so.

You will not be surprised to know that the House of Lords decided the case in favour of the insurance company.

A Comparison

What I would ask you to do is to compare the result of this case with that of the Glasgow furniture removers. In both cases the insurance company were able to escape liability because the policy-holder had made an error or misstatement in the proposal form. But in the furniture removers' case the judges reached this conclusion with obvious reluctance, whereas in the case of the bibulous provost of Johnstone most people would agree that justice was done when the company were held not liable.

This brings me to the last question which I would like to leave with you. Is it possible and desirable to alter the law, to prevent companies from escaping liability in cases similar to that of the Glasgow furniture removers, where the inaccurate information in

² Law Reform Committee, Fifth Report (Conditions and Exceptions in Insurance Policies), Cmd. 62, paragraph 4. ³ *ibid.*, paragraph 14. ⁴ *Dawsons Ltd. v. Bonnin* [1922] 2 A.C. 413. ⁵ See [1922] 2 A.C. at page 424 (per Viscount Haldane) and page 434 (per Viscount Cave). For another case where some of their Lordships criticised an insurance company's policy, see *Glicksman v. Lancashire and General Assurance Co. Ltd.* [1927] A.C. 139. ⁶ *Thomson v. Weems* (1884), 9 App. Cas. 671.

the proposal form was of no materiality whatsoever, whilst enabling insurance companies to repudiate liability in cases similar to that of the provost of Johnstone? The Law Reform Committee considered that the following provision could be introduced into the law and that no legal difficulties would arise in its application:

Notwithstanding anything contained or incorporated in a contract of insurance, no defence to a claim thereunder should be maintainable by reason of any misstatement of fact by the insured, where the insured can prove that the statement was true to the best of his knowledge and belief^a.

In other words, innocent errors would not disqualify, but dishonest ones would.

Again, you will notice, the proposal is to leave the rule in existence but to alter the standard to be applied. Instead of strict accuracy, honesty is to be the test. From the point of view of those who insure themselves, this indeed seems a desirable change; a standard of strict and literal accuracy, in which one error, however innocent, will disqualify, seems a standard for Olympians, not men. On the other hand, it may be said with force that the change would go too far. It is usually relatively easy to establish whether or not a certain fact is correct; it is nearly always much more difficult to establish whether or not a statement was made honestly. Facts are objective; states of mind subjective. As a Chief

^aLaw Reform Committee, Fifth Report (Conditions and Exceptions in Insurance Policies) Cmd. 62, paragraph 14. ^bY.B. 17 Edw. 4, Pasch., fo. 2, pl. 2 per Brian, C. J.

The Fulness of Time

The Inheritance of the Past

The second of four talks for Advent by the Rev. R. S. BARBOUR

IN Advent Christians are looking forward to Christmas—looking forward, that is, to the festival of the coming of Christ in the past, as a baby at Bethlehem. It is a beautiful story, one of the most moving that has ever been written down; but is it just a beautiful story, with what would nowadays be called an inspirational value, and nothing more? Instead of trying to answer that question directly, may I take you back to what I attempted to say last week, namely, that if a man is to have health—if he is going to *live* in any full sense of that term—then the past to which he looks back, the present in which he finds himself, and the future to which he aspires must have a meaning for him. How does this work out with regard to the past?

You may be tempted to say that the past does not really matter; it can be forgotten, so long as the present and the future contain something worth while. But if you think for a moment you can see that this is not true. The past is desperately important, in two ways. To use what may seem to be rather old-fashioned religious language, the past involves a burden, and a blessing.

The burden of the past is that you cannot get rid of it. The consequences of the past are with us, for good or for ill, and there is nothing that we can do about it. 'If only I hadn't done so-and-so', we say, 'everything would be all right now'. Yes, if only I hadn't; but the fact remains that I did; and we know nowadays more clearly than ever in the past that in most cases we cannot altogether forget about such things. Even if we think we have forgotten about the mistakes we have made in the past, the ways in which we have hurt other people, and the ways in which other people have hurt us, these past events live on below the level of consciousness, and erupt in surprising ways at a later date, causing further troubles the origin of which we often don't understand. Indeed, psychiatrists and others have been accumulating evidence to show that there are some relationships in which we all share—like relationships between parents and their children—which lead only too easily into situations of the kind I have been trying to describe.

The burden of the past is the burden of guilt, and we are all carrying it—particularly those who don't realise that they are. Nor is it just a matter of the relations between individuals; it is a matter of social and political situations too, of the relations between nations and groups of people. In some ways the burden

Justice said nearly five centuries ago, 'The thought of man shall not be tried, for the Devil himself knoweth not the thought of man'. The proposed change, it can be said, would make it far more difficult for insurance companies to resist dishonest claims, and it is in the interests of the country as a whole, both on the score of general morality and in order to avoid an increase in the rates of insurance, that dishonest claims should come to grief.

One answer to this contention lies, I think, in the proposed onus of proof. If it was for the insurance company to prove that any statement was made dishonestly, then these fears would indeed be well grounded. But that is not the proposal. A misstatement would continue to destroy the policy-holder's claim unless *he* could prove that he believed it to be true; it is the insurance company and not the policy-holder who would get the benefit of any doubt on this point.

So the question is whether this proposal goes far enough, whether it goes too far, or whether it is about right; and on this there may well be differing views. But nobody will disagree with me when I say to you: 'Please be very, very careful in filling up a proposal form; if you don't know the answer to a question, or you are not certain, don't be afraid to say so; for on this may depend all your rights under the policy.—*Third Programme*

of the past hangs most heavily of all in politics, both national and international.

But the past brings a blessing too: a blessing which only too often escapes our notice also. By this blessing I do not mean primarily the accumulated inheritance of knowledge and skill and wisdom which one generation passes on to another, although that is real enough. By the blessing of the past I mean rather the sense of knowing where one is, the sense of having a status, of 'belonging'. This is a fundamental human need, and it is something which comes to us out of the past, although it has to be built up and reinforced in the present. At a time like our own, when everything is changing rapidly, this is something which people are often prepared to barter their very lives to obtain.

The burden and blessing, then, come to us out of the past; but when we take them together they constitute a dilemma which we do not always or even often see, but which is always there. We need this sense of 'belonging' to some group or nation or tradition or way of life which can command our loyalty; and yet the more we 'belong', the more we are tied up with the penalties which that 'belonging' inevitably brings with it.

Perhaps I could explain in this way. What we need is a past which (to coin a phrase) is 'really there' in past history, and is not just some figment of the imagination, like the mythical racial past of the Nordic race which the nazis invented as the foundation for their theories. Everyone knows that the purity of the Nordic race was a myth: yet what a powerful sense of 'belonging' it created; and, on the other hand, what a burden it carried with it! In fact, if our understanding of the past is not to lead us into disaster we must see it, so far as possible, as it was—good elements and bad all mixed together. We must face the quarrels, disputes, and hatreds that arise out of the past and persist into the present, and try to see them as an impartial judge would see them; otherwise our sense of belonging to our past, our loyalties, and so forth, will only lead us into a renewal of the struggles of the past in a different form.

But to be an impartial judge is virtually impossible; we are inevitably also advocates in our own cause. If we were not advocates in our own cause, we would not really be 'belonging'; we would have torn ourselves loose from our roots in our own tradition and society, and this, I believe, always carries with it

(continued on page 991)

NEWS DIARY

December 4-10

Wednesday, December 4

Arrangements for evacuating Dutch people from Indonesia are discussed between the Netherlands Diplomatic Mission and the Indonesian Government

Guatemala recalls her Minister in London

The Lord Chancellor tells the House of Lords that there is no early prospect of legislation on homosexuality

Thursday, December 5

The Indonesian Government orders the expulsion by stages of all the Dutch nationals in the Republic

The French Prime Minister wins a vote of confidence in the National Assembly for his new tax Bill

The Jordan Foreign Minister states that he is satisfied with the outcome of his talks with the U.N. Secretary-General

Friday, December 6

The first American attempt to launch an earth satellite fails in Florida. Mr. Khrushchev states that the carrier-rocket of the first Soviet satellite fell on American territory

Sir Edmund Hillary's trans-Antarctic team starts on the last stage of its journey to meet the main body of the Commonwealth expedition led by Dr. Fuchs

Saturday, December 7

The North Atlantic Council, at the request of the Netherlands, discusses situation in Indonesia

Troops and police disperse demonstrations by Greek-Cypriot students in Nicosia

Mr. McElroy, U.S. Secretary of Defence, arrives in London for talks with the Prime Minister and members of the Government

Sunday, December 8

The new Governor of Cyprus appeals for calm in the island while the United Nations is debating its problems

Statement by the Spanish Ministry of War says that organised resistance by Moroccan irregulars in the Ifni enclave has ended

Vice-President Nixon warns the American people not to be defeatist after the failure of the attempt to launch an American satellite by rocket

Monday, December 9

London busmen reject advice of their Union to submit pay claim to arbitration

More disturbances take place in Cyprus

Tuesday, December 10

A curfew is imposed in Nicosia

Airlift of Dutch refugees from Indonesia to Singapore is begun



A photograph taken in Florida on December 6 as the carrier-rocket containing America's first earth satellite exploded immediately after it was launched from its stand. The satellite itself was recovered almost intact



Sir John Gielgud as Prospero in Mr. Peter Brook's production of 'The Tempest' which has been transferred from Stratford upon Avon to Drury Lane, London



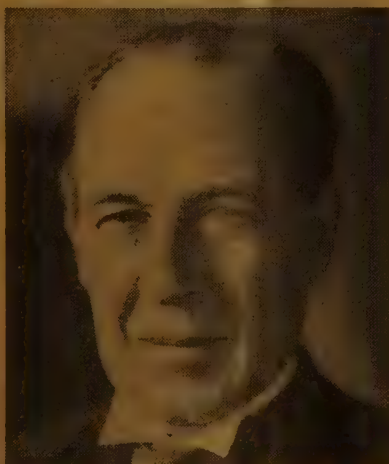
Choristers of the royal chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula sing carols for Christmas



Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, as Chancellor of London University, conferring the honorary degree of Doctor of Music on Princess Margaret at Senate House on December 4



Salvage teams still working, two days after the railway disaster at Lewisham on December 4, to recover bodies from the wreckage. Eighty-nine persons were killed and over 100 seriously injured when a steel flyover bridge collapsed on two trains that had collided in the fog



Viscount Waverley, on whom the Queen has conferred the Order of Merit. The Order was received by Lord Waverley (formerly Sir John Anderson) in hospital last Sunday. The Prime Minister attended the ceremony

Right: interior of the restored Church of St. Bride's in the City of London which was almost completely destroyed in the war. The Queen is to attend the service of re-dedication on December 19



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JUST A THOUGHT

Spare a thought for Christmas, which comes but once a year—the season of goodwill to all, though it may cost you dear. Once more the hordes of relatives will come to stay and stay, and on the stroke of 4 a.m., the children rise to play. Aunt Agnes will not speak to Flo, and George will be a bore, and Uncle Fred will stay in bed upon the kitchen floor.

Dear Grandpapa will go too far with Cousin Mary Jane, and Grandma will, as usual, do nothing but complain. Poor Mother will be quite worn out . . . a nephew will be sick . . . the turkey quite recalcitrant, as tough as any brick. Your choice of presents will be wrong, the ones you get—unnerving.

But don't despair, eschew dull care, press on with aim unswerving. For Christmas isn't Christmas still if you're not gay and merry. The moral's plain—to feel no pain Drink More Mackenzie's Sherry.

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(continued from page 987)

its own penalty. It makes of us Utopians, forcing us to live entirely on the future, and then we can never really appreciate the true depth of the struggles of our time.

What has the coming of Jesus of Nazareth on to the scene in Palestine nearly 2,000 years ago got to do with all this? He was a Jew, with the traditions and loyalties of the time in his bones (although, like a few other great men, he was able to reform those traditions without merely breaking away from them in a way which lesser men cannot do). It is clear enough from the work of modern scholars that what he intended to do, and what his early followers understood him to have done, was to found a new people to take the place hitherto held (at least in their own estimation of the matter) by the Jews. Thus it is to be expected that those who accept his claim would say today to the Jews: 'You were the chosen people, but you've been pushed out and we've taken your place'—and this, in any ordinary human situation, would be bound to involve a certain element of scorn, or hatred, or condescension, or superiority, or a mixture of some or all of these things; in fact, a burden of guilt.

But—and here is the point—in so far as the man who makes this claim on behalf of Christ really is a Christian it does not involve any of these things. For this new people—which is in fact the Christian Church—while it has a perfectly clear historical existence, and is not just a Utopian idea, was founded in a way that appears to be unique. It was founded, in the first place, in spite of its earliest members and not because of them. They all ran away at the end of Jesus' life, and later had an overwhelming conviction, which they at least could not explain in human terms, that somehow they had been

pulled into this new movement in spite of themselves.

But, secondly, the Christian Church was founded on a crime. Nobody believes that Jesus of Nazareth was guilty of those charges on which he was arraigned and condemned. Ever since then the Christian Church has existed on a strange mixture of thanksgiving and shame and joy, in the unshaken conviction that this human crime, which reveals men in their most sordid and least spectacular mood, and which is certainly among other things a judgement on Christians themselves, is in fact the only basis for life and health in community together. Is there any human explanation for this strange conviction? Or is the Church right in maintaining that the only explanation for this unpredictable state of affairs is that the hand of God is in it?

This much at least I should like to say now. I can see no other point in history, and I can look back to no other past within history, where the burden of the past and its blessing do not contradict one another; for here is a community whose blessing is the fact that the burden has been taken from it: and it is a real past, rooted in history, the meaning of which becomes more and more vivid to us as we seek to put ourselves within the stream of the Church's life. There is an Advent hymn—perhaps the only hymn in most modern hymn-books drawing its imagery entirely from the Old Testament—which carries us back to the time when what is now past lay entirely in the future. And yet as we sing it we become aware that this is a living past, a part of our being more intimate than any Elizabethan age or any Empire on which the sun never sets: 'O come, Immanuel . . . O come, Thou Lord of might who to thy tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times didst give the law . . . O come, Thou Rod of Jesse . . . O come, Thou day-

spring . . . O come Thou Key of David'. Do these seem remote and unintelligible ideas to us today? To get the full flavour of their meaning we have to learn about them and live with them, and do that not only on Sundays but all the time. But this is true of any living past, of any tradition that is worth having. You must get inside it if it is to have any value for you. And what is distinctive about these ideas is that they hold people together in a real community which has historical roots and yet does not lead its members to regard everyone else as an inferior outsider whose interests must be ignored or suppressed if the tradition is to be kept pure.

Of course, the Church has often failed in this. It has often regarded outsiders as inferior, and more often it has simply been uninterested in them. It has been involved in persecutions and hatreds of all sorts. It has its own burden of guilt to carry. But it does not live, as all other communities must, by attempting to disregard this burden of guilt. It lives precisely by acknowledging that the burden of guilt is there, and has been there ever since, on the night of Gethsemane, the followers of Jesus all deserted him and fled. The solitary figure of Jesus on that night constituted a judgement on all his followers, a judgement which Peter was the first to know when he wept in the courtyard of the High Priest. But the fact that Jesus went on through suffering and death to New Life constituted, at the same time, the forgiveness of his followers. The judgement and the forgiveness were welded into one; the burden was turned into a blessing.

This is the Christian past; and there is nothing like it in all history. Because it is a living past we can still say 'O come Immanuel'; the living past turns, before our eyes, into a living hope for the future.—*Home Service*

A Religious Justification of Divorce

IULIA DE BEAUSOBRE on the attitude of the Eastern Church

WESTERN Christians are perplexed by the Eastern Church's attitude to divorce. And no wonder; for the Orthodox Church (as it is often called) accepts divorced persons' re-marriage on the force of its own views on mutual human love. These views are not shared by the West, nor are they really understood here. Yet they are clearly Christian, and neither sentimental nor romantic.

Love (as relevant to marriage and divorce) is seen in the East to be two-fold: the love of a man and a woman being closely intertwined with men's love of mankind. And before God the demands of this two-fold, entwined love are felt to outweigh all other mutual human obligations.

Perhaps the West's perplexity stems from divergent views between it and the East on a basic human situation. Mankind is on the one hand a generator of love in its midst; and, on the other, a passionate maker of laws intended to guarantee survival or achieve better living. Always we are generating love in its many forms. Old as the hills and new as the dawn

it is there, in our midst, always; as are the laws we live by—some obsolete and unworkable, others to be tried out in the coming years. Day in, day out, we are ground fine between the abundance of love we cannot but generate and the abundance of laws we cannot but make.

There is room for much disagreement on this human situation. Who can find the absolutely best way of adjusting us to the forked lives we all have to live? The Orthodox way was much affected by the psychological climate of the Flock in its formative years. For centuries to travel eastward or westward in what had been the Roman Empire was dangerous and hard. Intercourse between the two branches of the still undivided One Church often stopped altogether. And it has come about that the West simply has not the feel of the East's psychological climate.

On the whole the Eastern Church was not preoccupied with enforcing laws upon the laity; and the instructions of Orthodox ecclesiastics to their people about duty stressed above all charity. So fly-blown a word I must try to define. In the context of Eastern religious

thought, charity does not imply an amiable tolerance; nor is it synonymous with philanthropy—the sharing out of good things (material, intellectual, spiritual) by the haves to the have-nots. It implies an upsurge of compassion so great that action follows: always man-to-man action, personal, and regardless of the receiver's respectability or likelihood to settle down, do better, reform.

Such charity is closely linked to a sense of responsibility of each for all and of all for each, in practice within a narrow fold but in thought and intention enfolding mankind. If a Christian has horribly crashed, is it not largely because priest and laity have horribly failed him? We Orthodox are painfully aware that it is. And our awareness comes from those long-since accepted views on the two-fold love and the way in which its two strands affect each other.

Early on, Greco-Roman customs were being rejected or accepted into the Christian way of life. And the Byzantines realised that one Sacrament was practised before the Church's foundation. The proclaimed love of a man



the things they say!



This is the Age of the Common Man, all right!

Maybe, but even today I doubt if the worker gets a proper stake in industry.

Things are changing, though.

Not that I've noticed.

Well, quite a number of concerns now have profit-sharing schemes, and some — like I.C.I.'s — also enable their employees to become stockholders.

Yes, but these schemes are only smokescreens. The bosses simply depress wages to find the money to pay for them.

That's where you're wrong. I.C.I. workers get the wages that have been negotiated on their behalf by seventeen Trade Unions. Any benefits they receive under the Company's profit-sharing scheme are over and above what they get in their pay envelopes.

Yes, but I.C.I. isn't Santa Claus. If the wages don't suffer, something else must — amenities or something.

Wrong again, friend. I.C.I.'s policy has led to a steady improvement in the service conditions of its employees, and the profit-sharing scheme is just another example.

From now on, the employees are going forward with the stockholders as

joint partners in their own efficient and expanding business.



and a woman at its tidiest and fullest—the Sacrament of Matrimony—had long been known; and it was felt that in a marriage ceremony, whether Christian or pre-Christian, bride and groom were the true ministers. The abundance of love for one another that they testified to and proclaimed raised them for once to this position.

It was not until fairly late that churches took over from the civil authority the registering of marriages, and weddings became what they are now. But then, as now, the East knew of no specific binding together of bride and groom by the priest during the marriage service; and there were no vows that could be picked out as such. But at a significant moment bride and groom drank in turns (as they still do) from the cup of life—wine in a small vessel handed to them by the officiating priest in view of all present. Though not Communion, this has the overtones of it, and almost an equal solemnity; and it is assumed that the couple have been instructed by the priest and educated by the older members of the parish in the full significance of this free, voluntary act of two Christians.

The Church's Responsibility

It could be said that initiation into the fulness of love, which the entire Christian life is taken to be, is given a special, matrimonial bent during the weeks of a couple's engagement. No one can, of course, be self-educated in this sphere. It follows that the responsibility for a couple's adequate education in matrimonial give and take (which includes the Christian solution of its harshest problems) rests squarely with the Church: priests and parishioners. Such was one of the specifically Christian additions to the pre-Christian sacrament of matrimony. And when a marriage founders, priest and parish are seen as far from blameless. In fact the sufferers (the couple whose marriage has crashed) are in a sense less blameworthy than the rest; and they pay for their inadequacies in the coin of suffering.

Ideally (and I do stress ideally) there should be one marriage only, the couple should marry young, should live long, and die as near simultaneously as doesn't matter; because it takes years of living soul-to-soul (as a Russian saying has it) for the whole of matrimonial love in its Christian aspect to be followed through—the fulness of it requires a lifetime of joy and sorrow, compassion and discipline. For in the East, marriage and the whole of family life are seen as a discipline often likened to that of monasticism. Both rub away the sharp edginess of personality, as pebbles tossed together by sea-waves rub each other smooth in the long run.

But human relations are open to catastrophe. Yesterday's lovers do turn, almost overnight, into haters and tormentors. If all efforts at reconciliation have broken down, if the very basis of marriage is seen to have crumbled, if there can be no hope, no thought of re-kindling true, vigorous, mutual love, untarrying forbearance, and unwavering compassion for each other—then it is compassion together with a lack of illusions about life and sex that open the eyes of laity and clergy on the healing possibilities of a new and different marriage. Different it will of necessity be. Even a rugged landscape is altered by a cataclysm; men and women are more vulnerable than the most delicate land-

scape can be. But the divorce has got to have been a cataclysm.

The conditions for re-marriage may be very severe. They differ from case to case, are laid down by the Church authorities and have to be meticulously followed. The object is re-education in the demands of Christian love throughout the treadmill of married life. There is little romanticising or sentimentalising even of first marriages, of second marriages there is none; because sex is widely recognised for what it is—the ineradicable but most tricky component of the matrimonial situation; and since it also is by far the most frequent cause of matrimonial unhappiness, incompatibility, distress, the Church's views on adultery are relevant.

St. Basil's Ruling

One of the greatest and most austere of the Early Eastern Fathers explained at length who should, and who should not, be thought of as an adulterer. If a wife leaves her loving husband in order to live wantonly with another man, she is an adulteress. Should he after a while set up house with another woman, he does wrong, of course, but still is no adulterer; and the woman with whom he now lives, though committing an irregularity, is no adulteress at all. The obvious thing for those two therefore is to regularise the irregular situation. The same naturally applies, adds St. Basil, to a blameless wife deserted by her husband for another woman.

As to the children: it is up to priest, god-parents, parishioners, parent, and the second husband or wife, to use this upheaval—once it has happened—as one more introduction of the bereaved children to life's tragedies. And children do respond. It is good for them to grasp that this tragedy is not theirs primarily, but that of their unfortunate parents whose marriage has crashed. And it is good for young and old alike to realise anew that the only valid reason (I might almost say the only valid excuse) for marrying, is the insuperable devotion to each other of one man and one woman. Whatever worldly reasons men and women may have for setting up house together, and whatever dynastic or proprietary needs may be served by the birth of heirs, neither can be a cause for marriage in the eyes of the Eastern Church. Mutual devotion is the only adequate cause. Children and accrued property, prosperity and universal regard, may well follow—God willing—but cannot be the cause, and should not be an excuse for marriage.

The Married Priest

That adultery is not taken lightly is best shown by the case of a priest whose wife commits it. He is obliged to divorce her. Parish priests in the East are mostly married men; if not married, they are monks; because mere bachelorhood is no discipline in the sense in which monasticism and the family life are. But all married priests must have been married well before ordination. None should be so ordained before the age of thirty, nor ordained a deacon before the age of twenty-five; and five years as deacon is the general rule. Besides, one year of marriage free from the strains and stresses of a dedicated life (free even of the minor dedications of a deacon) is felt to be every young man's due. So a priest will mostly have been married some six years before he is ordained.

The reason for a young man's 'free' year of married life is worth considering. (It forms a counterweight to the austere view of family life as a discipline.) The early phase of a marriage is thought to give a young couple the clearest possible inkling of heavenly love; because they are discovering a new joy in each other and a new selflessness in themselves. Without the healthy amazement of these discoveries, no marriage is thought to have a propitious start. In favour of marriage preceding a priest's ordination by some years much can be said. There are subtle psychological and spiritual reasons for it; but also obvious, simple reasons. For one thing, a man proves himself fit or unfit to be the father of a parish by being able or unable to run his household and bring up his family. For another, he and his wife will have been 'one flesh' for so long, that infatuation will have been disciplined or, to use a different word which here means the same thing, humanised.

An Austerity Not for the Layman

But to return to a priest's obligation to divorce his adulterous wife: if, after years of joy and discipline, she commits adultery, regrets it, and comes back to him, marital relations will be resumed. Anything less would be a farce. But in his life from the moment of ordination the stress is on his priesthood, and he must be scrupulously attentive to the quality of his own sexual life. Adultery—an undisciplined passion—must not smear him; not even through her. It is not because as a man he should be less charitable than his parishioners that he must divorce his adulterous wife, but because of his specific position as God's servant. In his heart he should, of course, forgive her. But they no longer can share one life and be one flesh. The only way not to do so is to part absolutely: a harsh exaction since he, being ordained, cannot marry again. But to impose on laymen and laywomen so austere a loneliness (which on the human level amounts to a comfortless old age) seems to the Orthodox uncalled for, and even—life being what it is—undesirable.

I do not wonder that the West finds this attitude to divorce and remarriage too different from its own to make sense. But I can see why some Orthodox are inclined to think the Western attitude cramped through over-simplification, sadly blind to the tragic cast of human life, as a legalistic approach often is, and therefore hard of heart.—*Third Programme*

Dr. C. V. Wedgwood's Leslie Stephen lecture, given at Cambridge last March, on *The Sense of the Past* has been published by the Cambridge University Press, price 3s. 6d. Mr. H. R. Trevor-Roper's inaugural lecture as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University on *History—Professional and Lay* has been published by the Clarendon Press, price 2s. 6d.

The Stamp Memorial lecture for 1957 *On the Decline in the Value of Money* delivered by R. G. D. Allen, Professor of Statistics, before the University of London on November 12 has been published by the Athlone Press, price 3s. 6d.

Mr. Colin Wilson, author of *The Outsider*, has published a new book, *Religion and the Rebel* (Gollancz, 21s.). In his autobiographical introduction he says: 'This book is still not a final solution of the problems that preoccupy me—how could it be? Rather it is the opening of a new line of thought that increases the problems I have already raised in *The Outsider*'.

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Letters to the Editor

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The Aims of British Foreign Policy

Sir,—I hope I may comment on the Foreign Secretary's broadcast (published in THE LISTENER of December 5) on the ground that as he so rightly said, it was not a party political broadcast at all, but a statement of national policy. As such, it was a very severe disappointment in spite of the speaker's serious intention, because in answer to his own crucial question near the end, 'How can we break out into a more peaceful atmosphere?', he fades away into such mere bromides as, 'what we have to do is to pursue steadily and firmly our present path'.

Mr. Lloyd's feebleness would have been less obvious if Mr. George Kennan's fourth Reith Lecture had not been printed in full in the same issue; for Mr. Kennan asks in effect the same question, and he makes answers which show up Mr. Lloyd's emptiness. He makes the following points:

(1) The situation is the more dangerous because we are being conditioned to a belief in the inevitability of war, and to allow this is 'the worst disservice to peace'.

(2) In his opinion—and as former U.S.A. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. he should know—the Russians have never wanted a universal war at any time since 1945.

(3) He sees 'no grounds whatsoever' for confidence in any schemes of defence against atomic attack.

(4) He utterly rejects the suggestion that by confining ourselves at the beginning of a war to the so-called 'tactical atomic weapon' we could have a war without having an H-bomb war.

(5) He regards the suggestion now being cautiously advanced of arming other minor powers with atomic weapons with absolute horror as the most likely proposal of all to lead to total all-round destruction without a single compensating advantage.

Mr. Kennan's many other points are less easy to summarise, but they are constructive. They suggest a positive intention to do something to get peaceful coexistence between great nations which at present heartily dislike each other—often with good reason—at government level, though not apparently at population level.

When one compares Mr. Kennan's lecture with Mr. Lloyd's broadcast, one—or at any rate I—cannot help feeling that if Mr. Lloyd could change his present attitude of inarticulate helplessness for an attitude much more like Mr. Kennan's, or if Mr. Lloyd could give way to a positive character who really understands Mr. Kennan's approach, the hideous cloud over us all would pretty soon begin to recede.

It is terrible to get the impression from these two talks, in the same issue, that the man with the real power can think of nothing to say or do in so desperate a situation, whereas the man of immense and relevant experience, but with no power at all, sees all, but can do nothing to save us all.—Yours, etc.,

Totnes H. W. HECKSTALL-SMITH

Ceylon: the Happy Island

Sir,—Readers of THE LISTENER who saw Mr. Gerald Priestland's comments on 'Ceylon: the Happy Island' (November 28) and who know Ceylon will be at one with Mr. Priestland in praising the beauty of the island and the delightfulness of its people. But they will be sorry to see that he has fallen into the common error about the Tamils in Ceylon and has lumped them all together as 'fairly recent immigrants, within the last century . . . brought over by the British tea and rubber planters'.

In saying this he has misrepresented facts that are of great importance in the present political situation in Ceylon. There were, it is true, at the 1953 census 984,327 'Indians', mainly Tamils who are descendants of 'recent immigrants'. But there were also in Ceylon at the time of the same census 908,705 'Ceylon Tamils'; the great majority of these are the descendants of people who came to Ceylon centuries ago, some of them possibly nearly two millennia ago, and who settled particularly in the Jaffna peninsula in the north and also down the north-west and north-east coasts. The Ceylon Tamils have in recent times supplied notable national leaders like Sir Ponnambalan Ramanathan, and a large number of distinguished public servants both in British colonial times and thereafter. To suggest, as Mr. Priestland does, that these gentlemen and their fellow Ceylon Tamils are recent intruders who snapped up jobs before the Sinhalese 'knew what was happening' is to lend weight to the outbursts of those rabid communalists in Ceylon who would deny the Ceylon Tamils the rights that they possess as indubitable Ceylonese.

Yours, etc.,

Cambridge

B. H. FARMER

The Shadow of the 'Bulge'

Sir,—Mr. Wellens' stimulating talk on 'The Shadow of the "Bulge"' (printed in THE LISTENER of December 5) will have been of particular interest to teachers who are already having to deal with the increased numbers in the secondary modern schools. Any attempts in these schools to help the more intelligent children, who would in ordinary times have qualified for grammar or technical schools, will prove troublesome both because the secondary modern schools are not really fitted to deal with them, and also because their especial needs are likely to be supplied at the expense of the other children of more normal secondary modern aptitude.

There will also be too many of these latter even for the space, equipment, and staff available. Because of the overwhelming numbers much expenditure on education, and much of the work of teachers, will be wasted.

How many people, one wonders, apart from assistant teachers themselves, have any vivid realisation of the effects on children and their hypothetical education of their always having to be in large groups and classes? A class of forty is not just ten more than thirty. It is not even

just a horse of a different colour. It is a totally different animal.

When classes are too large even a limited amount of purposeful activity involves some regimentation. Individual contact and influence have to be given up. Free and interesting methods and even aims are more and more abandoned. Every day I sorrowfully fail in my real business of helping intelligent and pleasant individuals as I try to cope with the mob which consists of just those individuals. They become mere names and numbers. This they naturally resent. The atmosphere of school tends to grow more restrictive and repressive: and children are not merely deficient in the expected skills but develop a negative attitude towards both school and society.

What is being done about this? Mr. Wellens spoke of the 'bulge' as being a 'transient' problem. We in the overcrowded classrooms get the impression that this aspect of the situation is being used as an excuse to do nothing. All will be well, it is suggested, in six years' time. But what of the harm and waste in the meantime? When are parents going to start insisting and demanding that their children be treated as individuals and taught only in manageable groups? Is there no headmaster anywhere who is so impressed by the urgency of the problem as to decide that, come what may, or come as many as may, no teacher in his school will be asked to deal with more than thirty children at a time? Is there no educational official or no government inspector who would be prepared to help and back him? For, of course, given a conviction of the necessity, something useful could be done.

Yours, etc.,

A. C. BOND

Chatham

Sir,—Mr. Wellens, in his talk on 'The Shadow of the "Bulge"' (THE LISTENER, December 5), suggested that modern schools would have a bonus of a few intelligent children during the 'bulge' period who would have to be prepared for G.C.E.; but expressed the hope that, once this period had passed, these schools would have 'the graciousness' to 'give up this new-found interest'.

Nearly three-quarters of our children are channelled off into modern schools by the eleven-plus selection machine. The full enormity of this advice becomes clear when it is realised that all Russian children are already staying in school until seventeen in the towns of the U.S.S.R. and reaching a standard higher than our Ordinary Level G.C.E.; and that, just at the moment when Mr. Wellens begs our modern schools 'graciously' to retire from a brief incursion into the field of education, all rural schools in the Soviet Union will be expected to get all their pupils through the equivalent of an examination which less than twenty per cent. of English children are given the opportunity to pass.

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ticians, psychologists, Ministry officials, administrators, professors of education (save the mark) do practically nothing but tell the world that the majority of English children are slow and stupid; that only a quarter of our child population is intelligent enough to profit from a systematic secondary education. The tragedy is that they have succeeded in convincing a large proportion of teachers that this is the case, and the teachers in turn have convinced the children. This is not education but nihilism.

The real truth is that we know next to nothing about the abilities of most of our children because we have never given them a chance to develop any. Until a few years ago the vast majority left school at fourteen, the age when education proper begins. Since then we have been so blinded and deafened by eleven-plus techniques and the sales talk that has accompanied them that the modern school child, though first heir to 'secondary education for all', has less chance to get on in the world than the ex-elementary schoolboy of the past—as Mr. Wellens aptly underlines.

If we were not blind and stupefied we should be emphasising instead that nowhere else in the world is there technical skill to parallel that of the English working class. Why, then, as we enter the new technological age, are ever greater efforts made to denigrate the capacities of the working-class child and to relegate him permanently to a back seat? Because, at all costs, special privileges in education must be maintained. And because educationists have allowed themselves to be mesmerised by so-called 'intelligence' tests and naively suppose (as does Mr. Wellens) that some prime mover in the universe has somehow distributed 'intelligence' in a fixed proportion among the population of this country.

The Russians, of course, hold no such belief so they neither stream nor select their children; on the contrary, all are expected to reach a common standard and are helped to do so, just as are children of the higher income groups in English 'public' schools. There is a world of difference between this attitude and approach and the idea of contracting out of the job of education and then blaming the children for stupidity. Russian teachers emphasise, and rightly, that it is the broad foundation of general education available to all that has made possible such spectacular advances in higher education and research. The lesson is so obvious that only the truly stupid could fail to learn it.

Yours, etc.,

Leicester

JOAN SIMON

The Rediscovery of Eastern Christendom

Sir,—Neither the Rev. J. C. G. Greig nor the Rev. C. H. D. Grimes (whose letters are printed in *THE LISTENER* of November 28 and December 5 respectively) seems to have taken the trouble to refer to the first of my two talks. Both your correspondents either ignore or fail to grasp my fundamental contention that the significance of the rediscovery of the Orthodox world will only become evident when it is related to what is now happening in the West.

In reply to Mr. Greig, I would only observe that, so far from being guilty of a false assumption in regard to the complexity of Western theology, I argued at some length in my first talk that, from the Orthodox point of view, this apparent complexity is only superficial: that

Calvin, like so many of his Western contemporaries, is in fact a crypto-papist. Mr. Greig begs most of the questions that I was concerned to raise: 'the mystic highway of the East' seems to me a highly inaccurate and tendentious description of the tradition of catholic Christendom prior to the schism between East and West.

As for Mr. Grimes' letter, with its Popes in great turbans, it presents a point of view which was expressed with fewer inhibitions by a long line of nineteenth-century travellers. It is undoubtedly true that many Orthodox clergymen (like other foreigners) often wear peculiar clothes and have a strange and un-British attitude towards politics. But a point of view, which in Lady Montagu or Thomas Alcock is mildly entertaining, is rapidly becoming inexcusable in a Christian who is not totally insensitive to the challenge of the events of the last forty years.

Yours, etc.,

Cirencester

PETER HAMMOND

The Bitters Bit

Sir,—Mr. Geoffrey Gorer, reviewing *The Hidden Persuaders* by Vance Packard (*THE LISTENER*, December 5), is amused by the wide acceptance of motivational research on Madison Avenue. He infers that Dr. Dichter and his less publicised contemporaries have spotted unconscious longings for omnipotence among big advertisers, and have made them 'fall guys' for their research stunts.

Irony makes his explanation engaging, and there may be a grain of truth as well as salt in it. But the growing use of motivational research—in Britain as well as in psycho-analysed America—is due to a more prosaic reason than Mr. Gorer mentions.

It is good economics to earmark a small part of a large publicity budget for research, to ensure that the campaign's timing, media and message are as well chosen as information can make them. Most such research is simple enough—market analysis, readership, distribution and pantry checks, copy and product tests, and opinion polls, etc. These methods can establish who are potential buyers, where they shop, and when they will buy. They date back at least to the nineteen-thirties, and copy testing much further back. They have not answered one important point: *why* people buy or don't buy. That question has been answered by advertising men's fallible hunches. Motivational research is merely meant to check the answer to 'Why?'

It is melodramatic to imagine that motivational researchers have revolutionised advertising appeals. There is as much insight in some old campaigns—for instance some of those Claude Hopkins created for Lord and Thomas clients early in the century—as in any campaigns based on motivational research. The methods of motivational research are helpful rather as a fallible check on hunches than as a source of new ideas. Perhaps motivational research pays for itself mainly in a negative way by exposing appeals which are useless. And if it does not pay for itself at least part of the time, it will cease to be used.

Searching for the most effective appeal is just a part of the job of making advertising a more efficient economic activity. Such work is not dangerous, not bizarre, and not a stunt.

Yours, etc.,

Rhyl

TOM HOOSON

Managing Director, *Welsh Farm News*

Thorstein Veblen

Sir,—It was Thorstein Veblen's merit to have seen through the rationalisation with which those engaged in luxury consumption in his day were wont to justify their behaviour. It is doubtful whether Veblen was correct in trying to expand these observations into a general sociological law—but it is somewhat rash to assume that they are already out of date.

Of course, conspicuous consumption in private life has largely disappeared in this country since the war, but it has shifted to what one may call the 'office' sector. The private citizen no longer employs flunkies to stand round in his home to 'deputise' for his leisure, as Veblen suggested; but have we never heard of the 'busy' executive, who has several secretaries sitting in his inner and outer offices whose presence lends him prestige? And I wonder what Veblen would say about business men too 'busy' to conduct their business in their offices, lunches 'on the expense account', and a country where half the motor-cars are bought as 'business investment'. I imagine that he might have argued that, whereas conspicuous consumption of the kind analysed—or satirised—by him, was consumption of private income, our modern variety of this phenomenon is more pernicious in that it takes place on the plea of 'business prestige' or even 'efficiency'.

Since the demarcation between 'office' and 'private' consumption is not always easy to maintain in practice, Veblen might well feel that we have come back in a circle to a state of affairs where prestige plays a major part in the direction of consumption—and therefore of production.

Yours, etc.,

Dunsden Green

RALF BONWIT

'Portrait of George Gissing'

Sir,—In commenting on 'Portrait of George Gissing' (*THE LISTENER*, December 5) in 'The Spoken Word' Mr. Michael Swan writes that 'his whole life was an expiation of the act of dishonesty committed when he was at Owens College, Manchester, and which landed him in gaol'.

Is there, in fact, any evidence that Gissing *did* commit an act of dishonesty and suffer a term of imprisonment? Apart from the account given by Morley Roberts in *The Private Life of Henry Maitland*—an admittedly unreliable 'biography'—I know of none. The expiation theory depends for its validity on the existence of some 'act of dishonesty' in Gissing's early life. Was Mr. Curtis, who arranged the 'Portrait of Gissing', relying on Morley Roberts' account or had he some more trustworthy evidence?

Yours, etc.,

Matlock

ERIC F. MANSLEY

'Lysistrata'

Sir,—There seems to be a flurry of interest in Aristophanes every twenty years. Since Mr. Walker seems to be in recording mood may I recall to him a version of 'Lysistrata' by Reginald Beckwith and myself commissioned by Norman Marshall, and produced by him at the Gate Theatre in the 1935-36 season? The same version was directed by Noel Hiff on the Third Programme in, I think, 1949. At the time we were under the impression that it was the first production of the play on the air.—Yours, etc.,
London, S.W.1 ANDREW CRICKSHANK

Art

Round the London Galleries

By ALAN CLUTTON-BROCK

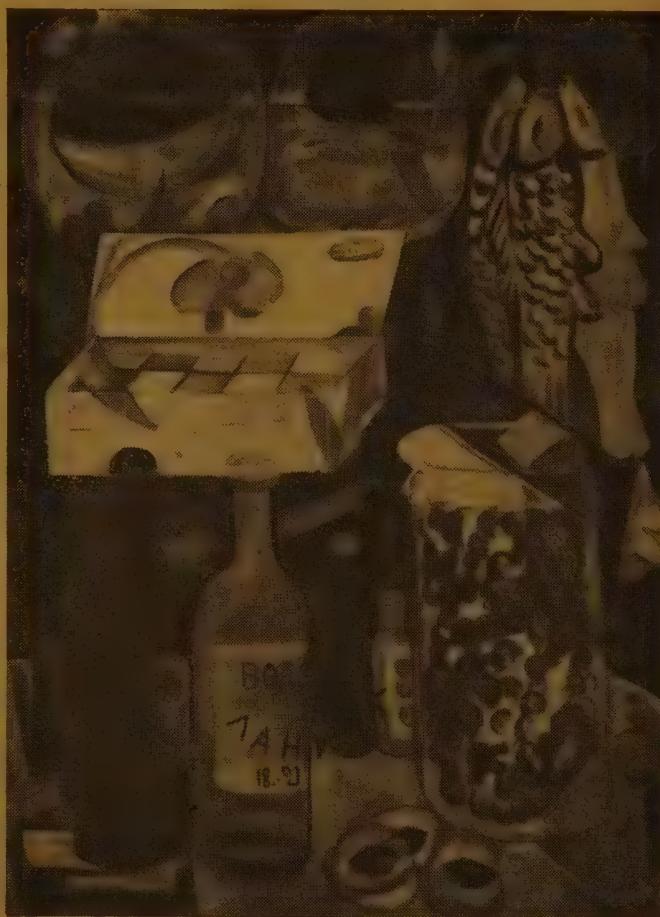
THE art of the Ming dynasty in China is generally regarded, though not by collectors and experts, as being an art in which opulence is sometimes gained at the expense of vitality and craftsmanship often exerted to the inhibition of feeling. The catalogue of an exhibition at 4 St. James's Square, which has been arranged by the Arts Council and the Oriental Ceramic Society, the first adequate display of Ming art to be held in this country, describes certain wares decorated in turquoise, deep blue, purple and yellow-brown and calls them 'Ming for millionaires'; the sniff of the critic, averting his eyes in the direction of Chou, T'ang, and Sung, will at once be provoked by this all-too-telling phrase.

But our appreciation of Oriental art has surely been too much affected in recent years by that disease of criticism, the tendency to look for the one right name, the single approved period, and when that has been found to condemn all else; so Japanese art has been all wrong even though certain Japanese vases were often thought to be Chinese, and Ming put into the shade by earlier dynasties. Admittedly there are objects in the exhibition, such as the work in red lacquer which is here represented by so many collectors' pieces, which do seem to have a rather lifeless refinement of execution.

But Ming art extends over three centuries and includes many schools and branches of both art and craft; this wide range comes out very clearly in the exhibition and no open mind can fail to be touched by the extreme delicacy and tender sophistication of many paintings, porcelains, *cloisonné* enamels, and jades. To take one example, a fan of gold-flecked paper decorated with calligraphy by Wen Cheng-Ming—such brushwork as this, such perfection of touch, might put to shame any of the more highly esteemed abstract paintings of today.

Mr. Anthony Fry's recent paintings at the Leicester Galleries clearly reveal a natural and unforced talent which is refreshingly unaffected by any of the more obvious preoccupations of young artists at the present time. His landscapes, painted very sweetly in fresh washes of thin colour, with an occasional passage of richer impasto, seem to be at the same time the most serious and the most immediately attractive of his works; the green landscape lent by the Arts Council is a particularly good example of his capacity for combining a searching definition of form with an easy lightness of touch. He may perhaps have looked at Gainsborough, but if so, he has also attended to the safer instructions of Cézanne; the two lessons, at any rate, seem to have been taken together with singular tact. In figure painting his 'Nude (No. 3)' shows that

he is professional and sound, but it is less easy to see what he is aiming at in some groups of rather queerly constructed nude figures of dancers against a sunset background; the romantic strain clearly present in his disposition is given more satisfactory expression in the discreet glow of light in 'Evening Landscape (No. 2)'.



'Nature Morte aux Poissons', by N. Gontcharova: from the exhibition at Gimpel Fils

Mr. Kyffin Williams' paintings at the same gallery are in his familiar style; there is a rugged use of thick paint combined, in a way that is certainly unusual, with a keen appreciation of values and a very neat use of sudden, sharp lights; one or two portraits in the exhibition seem to show this technique at its most effective. Mr. Ronald Searle's drawings, also at the Leicester Galleries, include some really sinister jokes as well as a number of shrewdly malicious studies of people and scenes in Paris and the United States.

The exhibition of modern Turkish painting recently held in Edinburgh has been brought to London by the Matthiesen Gallery and yet once again we are shown that it is now almost impossible for any frontiers, useful as these might be, to exist in the world of art. All too obviously it is Paris which now holds the gorgeous East in fee, much to the detriment of its gorgeous-

ness; some artists have made some reference to Anatolian peasant arts in their work, but the result is usually a queer hybrid and on the whole the works which are entirely of the school of Paris, the roomful of abstract paintings, are unfortunately the most easy to appreciate.

Wildenstein's Gallery has once again generously put its handsome rooms at the disposal of some young, or as yet little-known, artists. Mr. James Neal's London views, lively and strong in colour, Miss Mary Newcomb's sensitive and not-too-whimsical fantasies, Mr. Edward Wakeford's watercolours of Sardinia, executed in a brisk but graceful handwriting, and Mr. Timothy Rendle's neatly simplified studies of architecture, all show talent.

'Recent Acquisitions' at Tooth's Gallery is an interesting and highly varied collection which includes a large view of the Tower of London by Samuel Scott, an excellent Rouault, showing visitors to a picture gallery, a very recent Vlaminck, a small portrait of his sister by Constable, a curiously coloured still-life of a skull and other emblems of mortality by Braque, some Monticellis, and a highly accomplished pastel by Mary Cassatt.

Roland, Browse and Delbanco's Gallery again has an exhibition of small paintings designed to serve as Christmas presents, with good examples of the work of Sickert, Alexander Jamieson, Paul Maitland, Odilon Redon, Steer, J. B. Innes, and, most unexpectedly, an extremely tasteful painting by Felicien Rops. It would be nice to move in such exalted circles that there was a chance of some acquaintance paying one the compliments of the season with a postcard-size Renoir landscape, picked up for 2,000 guineas.

Next door, the Redfern Gallery has made a vast collection of nearly 1,200 paintings and prints of marine subjects; the paintings are nearly all naive, the prints often highly accomplished. The Gimpel Fils Gallery has made a large and interesting survey of the cubist movement, which shows how far-reaching was its influence, sometimes on the most unlikely painters, during the twenty years or so from 1908 onwards. It is comprehensive enough to include the Russians Nina Gontcharova and Larionov, whose work we do not often get a chance to see in London.

The Victoria and Albert Museum has opened new picture galleries and worthily displayed its important collection of paintings against walls and screens covered with red fabric for the Constables and other nineteenth-century English pictures, with green fabric for the Ionides collection—does everyone know that this includes a splendid Degas?—and with a clean background of cream for the English water-colours.

The Listener's Book Chronicle

The Pen and the Sword. By Michael Foot. MacGibbon and Kee. 30s.

AS A JOURNALIST AND A POLITICIAN it is natural that Mr. Michael Foot should have been attracted to the reign of Queen Anne when the relations between Westminster and Fleet Street—or rather its contemporary equivalent, Grub Street—were never more active and intimate. Because writers then had no hesitation in pocketing their pride and placing their pens at the service of politicians they acquired a more positive influence than ever before or since. And of these none was more powerful, none more diabolically clever, than Swift. Jonathan Swift was the Bernard Shaw of his generation. Within a few months of his arrival in London during the autumn of 1710 his mordant pen and corrosive satire struck terror and rage into the hearts of his enemies in Church and State. Week by week this apostate Whig and absentee Vicar of Laracor, now become the dining companion and (as he liked to imagine) the close confidant of Harley and St. John, distilled his exquisite irony into the pages of *The Examiner*. While daily newspapers had hardly more than a local circulation, weekly publications such as this penetrated to the remotest parishes, where delighted Tory parsons read them aloud to illiterate but submissive congregations. Thus did the voice and views of Swift spread, as did those of no politician, from one end of the country to the other. Thus did the Pen—the dreaded pen of Swift—come to be couched in challenge against the Sword.

For in the hands of the greatest Captain who ever led British troops into battle, the Sword like the Pen had acquired a matchless fame. Even the Tories who had accepted with lukewarm enthusiasm the War of the Spanish Succession could, like the ranks of Tuscany, scarce forbear to cheer as one Marlburian victory succeeded another. Nevertheless when eight years had passed and the ruling Whigs showed no zeal in bringing about a peace it was not only the high-flying Tories but the country at large who showed restlessness. When the General Election of 1710 swept the Tories into power, their first and most important objective (upon the attaining of which all others depended) was the ending of the war. But between peace and the Tories towered the mighty Duke of Marlborough. The Whigs they had overthrown with surprising ease; but how to get rid of the Duke, haloed with his magnificent reputation, without destroying the credit of the country was a problem beyond the unaided abilities of Harley and St. John, considerable though these were. The Pen had of necessity to be summoned to confound the Sword. The story of how this was achieved, how Swift, beginning with his articles in *The Examiner* and ending with that 'wonder-working pamphlet' *The Conduct of the Allies*, brought about the overthrow of Marlborough with scarcely any repercussions is dramatically told by Mr. Foot.

The Pen and the Sword does not claim to be based upon any but published authorities but these its author has handled with such skill and discrimination that it can be confidently recommended to anyone, be he student or general reader, who wishes to read again or for the first

time this oft-told tale. He must however be prepared to be slightly irked by the surfeit of exclamation marks which punctuate the text and, if he is a serious reader, he will almost certainly agree with this reviewer in deploring the inadequate index to a book of this calibre.

The War against Japan. Vol. I. By Major-General S. Woodburn Kirby. H.M.S.O. 55s.

This, the first volume of the official history of the war against Japan, is a story of unrelieved disaster. General Kirby and his collaborators have carried out a *post mortem* which is a model of its kind for lucidity of narrative and objectivity in its study of the causes of this greatest defeat in British history.

Confining themselves to the campaigns in Malaya, Hong Kong, N. Borneo and Indonesia, the joint authors make it painfully clear that defeat was made virtually inevitable from the outset. Making every allowance for our relative weakness in the Far East after two years of war in Europe and the Middle East, little excuse can be found for the way in which Japanese military prowess was so grossly underrated. Detailed reports and warnings from successive British Military Attachés in Tokyo were available for guidance, but these had either been ignored or disbelieved, and little had been done to study Japanese methods or the art of jungle warfare. How sadly those responsible for the defence of the Far East were out of touch with reality was reflected in the Order of the Day issued within a few hours of Japan's initial attack—in striking contrast with the cool, careful planning of the Japanese. In one respect only were Japanese calculations at fault. General Yamashita had estimated that Singapore would be in his hands one hundred days after the start of the campaign. In fact, only seventy days were required to complete the operations, at the relatively trivial cost of 15,000 Japanese casualties as against 166,500 Commonwealth dead, wounded and prisoners—a brilliant feat, but sullied by the ruthless behaviour of the victors on several occasions recorded in these pages.

Underrating the Japanese, combined with failure to heed warnings, was but one of many factors leading to this disastrous defeat. Others brought out in this study included the original planning of the Singapore defences on the assumption that attack from landward was impossible, the faulty siting of airfields, inadequate and obsolete aircraft, divergent views between the military and air authorities, lack of a properly co-ordinated and objective training doctrine, failure to produce an agreed combined plan in the Far East between the allied commanders, the far-reaching repercussions of the fall of France, and the political and diplomatic considerations which brought the attempt to forestall the Japanese in S. Siam to an untimely end and threw our defence plans into confusion at the very outset of the campaign.

Once the fighting had started, disasters followed in rapid succession. Airfields were evacuated prematurely and without destroying petrol and bomb supplies or rendering runways un-

usable; bridges were blown in error or left untouched; orders and counter-orders led to disorder; there were premature demolitions and failure, as at Penang, to destroy important installations; and defence works and obstacles, especially anti-tank obstacles, were inadequate. Tragedy followed tragedy as the Japanese quickly gained control of the air and, with the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, command of the seas as well.

But through all our follies and weaknesses there shone deeds of heroism and dogged fighting—the epic defence of the Hong Kong power station; the single-handed raid on Singora which won Scarf a posthumous V.C.; the fine defence of North Borneo by the 2/15th Punjabis; Lieutenant Wilkinson's gallant attack on a Japanese convoy with his auxiliary patrol boat; and the two surviving pipers of the Argyle and Sutherlands playing the wearied troops over the Causeway. Such incidents as these help to relieve the otherwise tragic tale recorded in this volume.

Georgina Hogarth and the Dickens Circle. By Arthur A. Adrian. Oxford. 30s.

The interest in Dickens appears to be inexhaustible, and nowadays extends to his ox and his ass and anything that is his. In time we shall no doubt have biographies from the pens of American professors dealing with 'his sisters and his cousins and his aunts'. But except for the portraits of his father as Mr. Micawber and his mother as Mrs. Nickleby, both obvious caricatures, there is little of interest to work upon, the truth being that all the energy normally spread over three generations of a family was concentrated in him, and he used it all up, killing himself in the process. Nearly all his relations lacked a fraction of his vitality, and it was a major worry of his life that his children, like his parents, seemed incapable of doing anything for themselves without his constant financial backing. His boys, he said, had 'a curse of limpness on them', and he gave as a reason for his reading-tour in America: 'You don't know what it is to look round the table and see reflected from every seat at it . . . some horribly well remembered expression of inadaptability to anything'. It was the common affliction of genius. If he had not been gifted with so much creative ability, his sons might have inherited enough energy to get on in the world. As it was, they had to share the fruits of their father's.

His wife's family were not much better, and he paid their debts as well. But his wife's sister Georgina certainly earned her keep. She managed his house, taught and nursed his children, attended to his own domestic concerns, acted as his secretary; and when he separated from his wife, Georgina became his hostess as well, risking the scandal of that anomalous position. She, at least, seems to deserve a biography, and at last she has got one. But the faithful disciples of remarkable men are usually the shadows of their heroes, and Georgina is no exception. She deserves a book, but her character does not justify it. She had all the virtues, gentleness, helpfulness, loyalty, unselfishness, an

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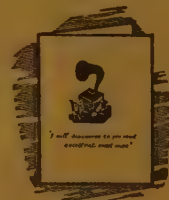
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affectionate disposition, but none of those oddities of nature that make a person interesting in print. Her biographer is therefore driven to write more about the master than the disciple.

Professor Adrian suggests that Dickens portrayed Georgina as Agnes Wickfield in *David Copperfield* and Esther Summerson in *Bleak House*, but he goes on to say that 'the high spirits, the natural lapses into indiscretion, the slight touch of malice in mimicking the idiosyncrasies of others' which made Georgina so amusing were omitted from the character of Esther Summerson. If he will re-read *Bleak House* he will find that we owe to Esther the most malicious, indiscreet and high-spirited portrait in the Dickens gallery—that of Leigh Hunt as Harold Skimpole.

Alas! there is nothing of Harold in Georgina, who deified Dickens and did her utmost to preserve what was least worthy of preservation in the writer who had made a corner in domestic sentiment, which had never properly got loose in fiction until his time. She enshrouded the Dickens of the fireside, placed him in a sort of spiritual shrine, and turned him into a Sacred Memory. Three times a year she visited his grave in Westminster Abbey: his birthday, his death-day, and Christmas Day. To the other side of Dickens, the man whose domesticity was shattered by the ruthlessness which was a part of his genius, she shut her eyes. 'Though Georgina frequently rallied to defend "the beloved memory" from one charge or another', writes the author, '... she apparently never made any statement as to what the Dickens-Ternan relationship had—or had not—been'.

It is difficult to make an exciting book out of a blameless human being, and Professor Adrian's is careful, conscientious, scholarly, commonplace and inanimate.

The English Face. By David Piper.

Thames and Hudson. 35s.

The approach to the subject of this book, as it is announced on the title-page, is studiously devious, and we are told why in the last chapter—so perhaps it would be hardly fair to give it away. It is a very readable grown-up child's guide to the fashions in British portraiture down the ages, artfully concealing much learning, and with many fresh observations and suggestions. Up to about 1750 it is really a history of British painting, but Mr. Piper is not only an accomplished historian of art, he is also one of the several ornaments of the National Portrait Gallery, and he thus has a professional attitude (or bias) in looking at portraits, which very few historians of art are able to claim. He is interested in the sitters and in how far the portrait is like them (or was thought to be like them), and in fashions in faces and clothes and wigs, and it enables him to take into account not only pictures and sculpture, but also silhouettes and photography in its early days. It is in fact this particular angle of vision which makes the book a most welcome contribution to the history of British art—and not only of 'English' art either.

It is a little consciously a 'popular' account, which is occasionally a pity. Mr. Piper is at his best when he is most serious, and his analysis of the virtues of (for instance) Samuel Cooper or Reynolds is both masterly and a real contribution to the subject—and then suddenly we are subjected to a torrent of clean fun about beards and whiskers, which is made to do more

than it ought for Victorian portraiture. But here an admirable treatment of the portraits of Carlyle and of John Sargent does a good deal to make up for the lapse.

When so much that is germane to the portrait problem is included, it is curious to find one subject which is not touched on at all—that is the change in the amount of sitting which different portrait artists demand or achieve. Holbein, who is properly Mr. Piper's idol, probably never got more than half an hour from his more important sitters, and it may well be that the demand for endless sittings is one reason why so much fashionable portraiture today reads like a collision, to the point of boredom, of two trivial minds. And then there is the most elusive thing in the book—the English face itself. 'Not beauty but character' is the title of Mr. Piper's consummating chapter, but surely a national face, if there can be such a thing—and surely, unless we are philosophers, we should be willing to admit that something must exist because we can so constantly recognise it—is the result of expression at least as much as of character, and expression is largely the result of what we are thinking about. There is a fascinating juxtaposition, on plates 121 and 122, of the head from one of Mrs. Cameron's photographs of Tennyson and the portrait by Watts. With Mrs. Cameron's long exposures one supposes that the bard was chiefly thinking 'I must keep perfectly still', but while sitting to Watts he no doubt reflected that this was for posterity and was able to meditate on poetry in hand.

Mr. Piper, like the rest of us, is not immune from an occasional tendency to read into faces something of the posthumous verdict of historians. This reviewer at any rate cannot detect 'ecclesiastical power politics' in the rather blank face of Cranmer, and how would we interpret the character of the sitter in the Thyssen Holbein of Henry VIII, if we did not already know who he was? The contemporary quotations with which the text is enlivened are always apt: the illustrations, many of them details, are extremely well chosen. The method of reproduction (a photogravure process) is a bit uneven and the captioning sometimes strays awkwardly on to the picture, while occasionally a page or double page of illustrations savours rather more of the River Hudson than of the Thames.

Wild Encounters. By E. A. Soper.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 25s.

This book is a pleasant collection of chapters on natural history, describing the birds and mammals seen by the author in her garden and the nearby countryside. About a quarter of the book is devoted to an account of a colony of badgers, animals to which Miss Soper has given several years of intense study. The colony was a large one and lay in the midst of a piggyery in a small wood of scrub elders and hawthorn—the author's adventures with the 'highly sensitive and hysterical' pigs were as amusing as those with the badgers, although perhaps not so interesting. She got to know her badgers well and, as described in a previous book, she was able to entice the young ones into feeding from a bowl of treacle held in her hand—a triumph of patience and persistence on her part. More than half the population of badgers wandered away about a year after Miss Soper began watching them, and took up new territories on neighbouring farms where they were soon detected

and destroyed by being gassed in their sets.

The section on badgers is followed by some excellent chapters on foxes, hedgehogs, hares, and other animals; they are full of careful observation set down with charm and gentle humour. It is surprising how even a small suburban garden can be laid out to harbour a population of nesting birds, and anyone who wants to make the most of his opportunities for attracting birds should read these chapters carefully. A special feature of the book is the large collection of beautiful drawings that embellishes it. The author is blessed with a most skilful pencil, and the slightest of her sketches conveys much more than the most elaborate photograph.

Studies in Applied Anthropology. By

L. P. Mair. Athlone Press. 13s. 6d.

In this short volume Professor Lucy Mair has gathered together six essays, dating from 1934 to 1956, on aspects of social change in Africa, a short homily, 'Self-Government or Good Government?', whose title gives a perfectly adequate idea of its argument, and a general introduction which in some ways directly contradicts most of the matter in the body of the book.

In this introduction Professor Mair stresses the very 'umble position which is now apparently fashionable among British anthropologists. For her, social anthropology is 'the study of systems of co-operation, based on the general recognition of rights and obligations and of the role that each individual is expected to play in the various situations likely to confront him, by which men succeed in living together in some sort of order and harmony... The anthropologist's field of study is... a number of persons linked by a network of socially recognised relationships, and his subject-matter is, not even the persons as organisms, but the completely immaterial relations... that exist between them'. This definition would appear to exclude any study of processes of change, or of the psychological motives which activate individuals or groups; the concrete papers which follow are almost entirely preoccupied with change, and motives are continuously being ascribed to people, though these motives do not appear to be structured about any coherent theory of individual or group psychology. The self-denying ordinance implied in the definition is also self-defeating; and psychological considerations are not exorcised by a refusal to be systematic about psychology; the employment of such a concept as 'the enjoyment of munificence' as a reason for a rich man continuing to accumulate property raises at least as many problems as it pretends to solve.

Dr. Mair's field-work was done among the Ganda of East Africa, and most of her essays take their illustrations from this tribe and deal with situations not too dissimilar. She is particularly concerned with the unintentional effects produced by some of the forms of indirect rule, such as the confirming of chiefs in their rights without instituting sanctions for their previous duties, and above all the changing from the previous conditional rights of land tenure to absolute rights, so that land can be sold, share-cropped or rented to tenants by absentee landlords. She shows how the application of European values to non-European societies may easily produce results far from the intentions of the innovators, how devices, which in Europe

have produced greater equality and independence, can, when transplanted, make for greater inequality in wealth and greater subservience in rank. Dr. Mair rightly states that 'wisdom is not a professional attainment' of anthropo-

logists, that 'we are not experts on social justice . . . in the conflict of values which is the central feature of colonial societies today, the anthropologist cannot claim to be the arbiter'; nevertheless her expositions combine clarity with such

good sense that they have many of the qualities of wisdom; and there can be few people occupied with the 'underdeveloped' territories in Africa or Asia who will not profit by a careful reading of these essays.

New Novels

The Habit of Loving. By Doris Lessing. MacGibbon and Kee. 15s.

The Divine and the Decay. By Bill Hopkins. MacGibbon and Kee. 15s.

The Walk, and other Stories. By Robert Walser. Calder. 10s. 6d.

'AND now, what about Miss Inkster?'
'Oh Lord!'
'I suppose we'll have to give her a First?'

'Oh no!'

'But look here: α , $\alpha-$, $\alpha+$, $\alpha??$ —'

'I know. But all the same you know, and I know, that she isn't really a First, she's just an accurate well-organised slogger, she hasn't got that something indefinable, that ability to take both feet off the ground at once, that —'

'I know. But all the same you know, and I know, that we'll jolly well have to give her a First'.

Such is the June scene at a hundred examiners' meetings. Miss Inkster gets her First. (For some reason—and I am not an anti-feminist—it is almost always Miss Inkster: Mr. Inkster gets his First in spite of his lapses, Miss Inkster in spite of her failures to soar.)

So let us proceed to Mrs. Lessing, whose collection of short stories, *The Habit of Loving*, shows a remarkable range in mood and subject and a remarkable control at all points of it. The title story describes the efforts of an elderly playboy to keep himself warm, in bed and out of it. The confusion between various senses of the word *loving* is of course his and not Mrs. Lessing's, as the latter is concerned (in the discreetest way) to make clear. She manipulates her puppet-playboy with a streamlined, contemptuous elegance: all the same there are modes of loving that do not appear to come within her vocabulary either. Several other stories, 'A Mild Attack of Locusts' for instance (an excellent piece of reportage), have African or South African settings. In all, one is unrelievedly conscious of the superiority of the writer's technique, of her mastery of difficult forms, of her adroitness in beginning and ending and going on in the middle.

All the same, and contrary to popular opinion, it is worth stressing that these things (technique, mastery, adroitness) *can be learnt*. It takes an undeniably clever woman like Mrs. Lessing to do it, but all the same it can be done. One thinks without difficulty of a couple of dozen writers (largely women again, I am afraid, and for that matter largely American women) who are, in the book-jacket sense, first-class stylists, contrivers, characterisers, and yet, when one comes to take a proper look at them, of absolutely no importance. I would be the last to deny that real creative excellence depends on learning, learning and learning again. At the same time the essence, what really matters in the arts and what ultimately they are about, is precisely that which cannot be learnt; if it could be learnt it would at once cease to be of any

interest or significance. Negative excellence, in fact, is not enough. To a later century—perhaps not to our own—I believe Mrs. Lessing and all her sisters will appear as artificial, cold and correct as, say, the minor poetasters of the eighteenth century do to us today. A real First needs the positive, the inexplicably generous, the needlessly rich, the *bombe surprise*, the unexpected beast that may easily jump all ways.

The Divine and the Decay is unquestionably such a beast, though I cannot at all make up my mind as to how far it may be a good one. That of course, I hasten to say—I mean my dithering about the merits or otherwise of Mr. Hopkins' book—is all in the beast's favour. A new author may do well to puzzle rather than to please. The 'hero' of *The Divine and the Decay* is Peter Plowart, co-leader of a new political party of obviously Fascist cut. The book finds him retiring to an unlikely Channel Island called Vachau, for the purpose (we subsequently learn) of establishing himself an alibi while he has his partner done in. Plowart is insanely proud, quarrelsome, obsessed with power. He believes himself, quite literally, to be the greatest man in the world. He is also tortured by nightmares in which the futility of ambition, of power, indeed of all human activities in the face of ultimate extinction, is horribly borne in upon him. (It says much for Mr. Hopkins, incidentally, that one finds oneself not skipping these dreams, on the contrary becoming agonisedly involved with them:

His desk was in the farthest corner, close to a window looking down on a side-street. He had almost reached it when the window was pierced by a missile. . . . It was a silver coin; an ordinary florin. . . .

There was no sign of a message. His next thought was that such a message could be ripped free on impact with the pane, perhaps fluttering down on the window ledge outside. He started forward, but suddenly trembled and stopped, his attention caught by the hole drilled through the glass. The circumference was curling like a pair of lips quivering on a scream. In a state of stupefied terror he waited, watching the hole pursing and relaxing; then a wind started to blow. At first the wind was only a sharp hiss of increasing pressure, but imperceptibly it changed into the thunderous shouting of a multitude of people.

Dreams in novels—or for that matter in conversation—are usually the most eminently skip-pable of subjects.)

On Vachau he finds much material for the exercise of his more unprepossessing faculties: at the same time he meets the good angel of this morality, the young and beautiful Dame of the island, who attempts to direct the flood

of his energies into a less demonic course.

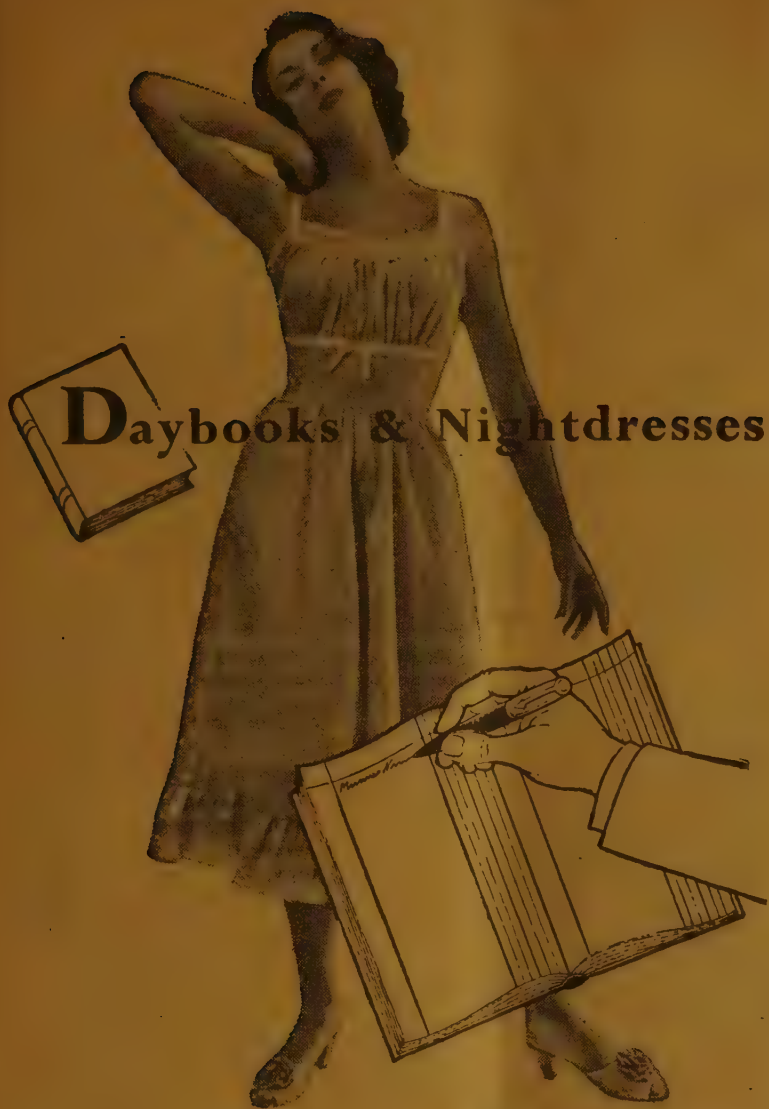
If Miss Inkster, stepping (in her sensible brown brogues) from triumph to triumph, had gone on to tackle this subject, we should have had a smooth, 'restrained', well-mannered piece in which Plowart, looked down upon from the great height of a lady moralist, would have been considered, exposed, 'explained away', and then either comfortably converted or brought to an appropriately sticky end. Pretty little critical claps all round, and the Silver Medal of the League for Liberal Humanities for brilliant thoughtful Writer Inkster! As it is, if Plowart is obsessed with power, Mr. Hopkins is obsessed with Plowart. The book has obvious weaknesses, sillinesses perhaps mainly due simply to a very young man's factual ignorance of the world he writes about—Wagner, for instance, really *isn't*, Mr. Hopkins, 'the most fashionable composer'; Bernard Shaw can be relied upon *too far*. But, but, but it doesn't really matter. At one point Plowart reflects (typically at once illustrating the limitations of his understanding and the wisdom of his feeling)

that this was the stupidity of all cultured minds. Remove the passions, and human beings truly are futile, impotent and inadequate.

The real stupidity, evidently, is the thoughtless equating of 'culture' and 'lack of passion'. The emphasis on passion, nevertheless, is all-important: the passions are what Miss Inkster lacks, and what Mr. Hopkins and his creature possess to almost claustrophobic degree. Indeed, so obsessed is Mr. Hopkins with Plowart that in the end I found it almost impossible to distinguish them, and what (I presume) started out as an anti-absolutist morality finishes in an apocalyptic splendour that has nothing to do with morality at all. This is an exciting story and it is remarkably well-written, even where it is remarkably ill-written, if the reader cares to see what I mean. Especially foolish advance publicity, of a personal nature, has (I imagine) got all the critics gunning for poor Mr. Hopkins: I don't propose, at the moment at any rate, to join them.

Robert Walser (1878-1956) is advertised by his jacket as a precursor of Kafka and Samuel Beckett. *The Walk* is a delicately evanescent parody or self-parody about nothing whatever, but withal delicate in a clumsy elephantine sort of way, full of the provincial sentimentality of the Swiss German, and ultimately (it must be confessed) a monumental bore. It is true that Kafka was fond of Walser, and evidently learned a little from him. As far as Beckett is concerned, it is not very easy to see why this name was dragged in.

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CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

Television Broadcasting

DOCUMENTARY

People and Places

THERE COULD BE no greater contrast either in places or persons than in the two travel programmes I viewed last week. It is a far cry from the British Isles to New Guinea, from the Thames, the Mersey, and the Lee to the Wahgi, whose valley is inhabited by a people with life and habits strikingly unlike those of the captain and crew of an English coasting steamer or, for that matter, of me; indeed 'The People of the Wahgi Valley' (Number 4 of David Attenborough's 'Zoo Quest') are the strangest people I have ever met even on a television screen, and that, nowadays, is saying a packet.

The strangest but by no means the most primitive: the pigmies and the African bushmen whom Armand and Michaela Denis and Laurens van der Post introduced to us were much more primitive but also, doubtless by reason of their simplicity, much more understandable and attractive. But these Wahgi folk with their elaborate customs and ceremonies were forbidding, though fascinating as a spectacle, especially when rigged out for some ceremonial occasion in gorgeous head-dresses made of shells and the plumes of cassowaries and birds of paradise, marching in procession through their mountainous forests.

Forbidding, too, was their kanana ceremony (I spell the word as I heard it fly past in Mr. Attenborough's commentary) in which young men and débutantes sit facing each other in a dark hut, rubbing noses, swaying to and fro and singing an endless tune of extreme dreariness; and that other ceremony, a feast cooked in something like a blend of compost heap and bonfire. But all these things by their very strangeness and the magnificence of their setting were enthralling to watch in Charles Lagus' wonderful films and to hear about in David Attenborough's

fluent and vivid commentary. For me the human race came out of it even more eccentric than I had believed.

It was reassuring to return four evenings later to members of one's own family, so to speak—the captain and crew of a British coaster. They were presented in a 'Sea and Ships' programme called simply 'Coasters'. After a brief chat between Alan Villiers and Joe Beckett, O.B.E., captain of the 'M.V. Pacific Coast', the broadcast settled down to a series of shots taken on the coaster's voyage from London to Cork and Cork to Liverpool, with a running



Natives of the Wahgi Valley, wearing head-dresses of bird-of-paradise plumes, during a tribal 'sing-sing', seen in 'Zoo Quest' on December 1



David Low (left) discussing his work as a cartoonist with Robert Mackenzie on December 4

quiet entries into Cork harbour and Liverpool, so evocative of sights, sounds, and feelings for anyone who has travelled by sea even if no more than across the Channel—the houses on either side growing and closing in as they glide past till they enfold the ship, the smell of harbour-water, and all the other fresh but familiar details. It is this power of evocation which doubles the impression made by programmes such as these.

A broadcast in which the person was the important feature and the setting negligible was 'David Low', in which that famous cartoonist talked about his work with Robert Mackenzie. It was comfortable, easy-going talk during which a number of Low's drawings were examined, first by the two talkers and then by us, and the aims and problems of the artist discussed. The artist, said Mr. Low, must extract the personality of his sitter, he must make the portrait more like the man than the man himself. It was interesting, too, to hear him say that the most impressive man he had met was Gandhi. Another well-known character shown us, this time in 'Tonight', was the French novelist Georges Simenon, who was interviewed by . . . was it Geoffrey Johnson Smith? I think so.

M. Simenon was unable to remember how many hundred novels he has written. Asked if he found novel-writing easier than at first he said No, much more difficult. Originally a novel was a matter of three days; now it takes nine or ten. However rough these estimates may be, M. Simenon's output is gargantuan and it is not merely a matter of quantity. The small fraction of his novels I have read, though light and by English standards short, are absorbing, their style crisp and vivid and their characterisation sharp. As his age is only fifty-five, he still has time to knock up another century or two.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG



'Panorama' on December 2: Woodrow Wyatt interviewing officers and men at a German barracks during a film report on the new German Army

commentary by Anthony Jacobs; in fact a straightforward broadcast with no technical novelties about it, no inexplicable behaviour by the crew, no gorgeous exotic ceremonies, yet rivalling the New Guinea programme in beauty of a subtler kind.

The *Pacific Coast* is a fine ship of 1,700 tons, and her passage down London River in the small hours of the morning, with the growing light silvering the water and the wharves and warehouses looming out of the darkness, was extraordinarily beautiful. So, too, were the slow,

DRAMA

Exits and Entrances

'THEY HAVE THEIR EXITS and their entrances'. They have. There is as much coming and going in Elmer Rice's 'Counsellor at Law' as in any modern play I know. In the theatre, I remember, the fretful bustle of that first act was distracting. On television even Rudolph Cartier's masterful production could not save me from a mild dizziness as clerks, clients, and assorted functionaries spilled in and out of the Park Avenue law offices of Simon and Tedesco (a name I confused invariably with Tuxedo), and Elmer Rice showed what a really professional dramatist could do when he got down to it.

This is an almost fantastically well-made play, mortised and tenoned. Mr. Rice, who worked in a law office as a young man—we can see him, maybe, in one minor character—must have had an elaborate chart of the whereabouts of all members of the Simon and Tedesco staff, as well as a variety of breeds without the law, at any given moment in two days. It is the tale of a tough attorney who has come up from Second Avenue, who has married a singularly snobbish wife—a sad error of judgement—and who is saved from disbarment by a bit of sharp practice, and from a death-leap (how fearful and dizzying 'twas to cast the eyes so low!) by his resolute secretary. She is without doubt the most grossly overworked secretary in the entire range of British and American drama.

On Sunday night this Rexie was my favourite character. I know I should have been giving more attention to Eli Wallach, who was the great 'G.S.' himself, and who—using the 'Method', I gather—acted with unassailable competence. But I believed more firmly in Barbara Chilcott, harassed, smouldering, and clearly in love. I relied on her implicitly to wring witnesses from the heart of New York, to obtain extraordinary telephone connections, to arrange for flowers to be sent to the boat, to prepare recondite documents. I don't know what method, if any, Miss Chilcott used; but it was a performance indeed.

'Mr. Simon is certainly a very busy man', said someone. To work in that office must have ripped the nerves. I felt that everyone who had anything to do with Simon and Tedesco went home to live in a darkened room, with an ice-pack, until the time came to go to the office next day. And I would not except even the telephonist whom Patricia Webster acted on Sunday with amusingly calculated nonchalance as she kept the busiest switchboard in New York firmly under control and managed simultaneously to live her own full life. The casting throughout was exact—one thinks of Joyce Heron, Roger Delgado, and Redmond Phillips—and Rice's sharp, quick dialogue came through at the proper speed. Only the occasional awkward phrase ('recognising the value of the social amenities') would pull one up with a jerk.

A good evening, then, in its key of heightened naturalism. I shall remember it for Miss Chilcott,



Barbara Chilcott as Rexie Gordon and Eli Wallach as George Simon in 'Counsellor at Law' on December 8

and for Mr. Cartier's production. He managed to impress us, from a Park Avenue skyscraper, with what Don Juan heard on Shooters Hill, that 'bee-like, bubbling, busy hum Of cities that boil over with their scum'. (Agreed, the last word is too unkind.)

Earlier in the week the exits and entrances of 'The Critical Point' had kept me afraid to approach a refrigerator. Evelyn Frazer had written, cunningly, a science-fiction 'thriller' that did everything but leave one cold. It began with the freezing of chimpanzees, and reached in due time the curious moment when a doctor, who had murdered his wife, was comfortably bedded in the deep freeze as a human guinea-pig in the experiment of 'hibernation anaesthesia'. The play had what must always be one of my favourite exchanges. Enter a detective-inspector in search of his victim, only to receive the answer: 'I'd better explain. Dr. Gage is at present enclosed in a tank full of solidified gas at a temperature of minus 80 degrees centigrade'. 'That sounds pretty cold to me', murmured the inspector, mildly taken aback: after all, it is rare that you find your suspects in tanks of solidified gas.



Scene from 'The Critical Point' on December 5, with Eric Lander (left) as Dr. Philip Gage, Margo Johns as Dr. Helen Schroder, and Leo McKern as Dr. Andrew Mortimer

The play went on with some vigour. A second title might be 'The Iceman Cometh'. If its treatment had been less determined on Thursday, it could have been the frozen limit, but Miss Frazer had written it ably, and Leo McKern, Eric Lander, and the others acted with so much absorption that it would have been ungenerous not to join the fun.

Alan Melville, continuing his happy task of applauding the London theatre, had an evening with the phenomena. One was that Veteran Phenomenon, 'The Boy Friend', which contains—as Mr. Melville said so rightly—some absolutely spiffing goings-on; and the other was 'At the Drop of a Hat', with its own cheerful pair of phenomena, Flanders and Swann: men who, in their time, sing many parts. They know just what a Simple, Happy Chorus Song (Mr. Flanders speaking) should be.

J. C. TREWIN

Sound Broadcasting

DRAMA

Masks and Faces

WAS IT, PERHAPS, the translation, earlier this year, of Salacrou's 'Histoire de Rire' as 'No Laughing Matter' that led Russell McKinnon Croft to call his version of Alfred de Musset's 'On Ne Badine Pas Avec L'Amour', in the Third Programme last week, 'Love is No Laughing Matter'? Anyway, this English title hardly hints at the range of a curious case of virtuosity which evolves from light, grotesque comedy, through emotional realism to a finale worthy of tragic melodrama, and somehow does it without destroying its own insubstantial unity. *Plus ça change*, in fact, *plus c'est la même chose*.

We start with a blithering baron, a twaddling tutor, a gossiping governess and a corpulent curé. The baron plans to pair his handsome young son, just back from acquiring a doctorate in Paris, with his angelic niece, whose education has just been finished in a nunnery. Her instruction, however, has evidently included 'do not trust him, gentle maiden' and so Camille will have none of cousin Perdican. But then the play deepens, as smoothly as a swimming-bath, into a psychologically subtle account of the conflict between the young girl from the convent and the young man of the world. Perdican makes love to a warm-hearted village girl—called, I am afraid, Rosette—and brings his cousin to her knees in tears before the altar, only to be separated from her for ever by Rosette's suicide in the church, a type of ending to which de Musset was somewhat addicted. But what sounds, in a bald outline of the action, a rather miscellaneous selection of theatrical *dichés*, is conured to contain and even to combine charm and humour with melodramatic situation, humanised characterisation with an atmosphere of romantic fantasy. The masks become faces without ceasing to be masks.

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sympathies in the performers; it absolutely insists that they shall be French. Margaret Whiting and Michael Gwynn were gallant, but insufficiently Gallic. Miss Whiting, apparently making a beginning to match the end, reduced Camille to a rather charmless bigot in the opening scene. Mr. Gwynn, reluctant to part with the attractively romantic Perdician he started with, allowed his performance to remain too light in weight towards the close.

James Bridie's physician-poisoner, Dr. Angelus, starts as a happy hypocrite, but the mask soon slips to reveal no human face behind, and it is much the same with the play that bears his name. Bridie was notorious for strong starts and feeble endings and the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre Company did their patron poor service in choosing such a flagrant example of his failing for their Home Service performance last week. It is easy to guess why they chose 'Dr. Angelus', all the same. The parts, as far as they go, might have been written for the talents of the whole company. Duncan Macrae, in particular, made good the travellers' tales from beyond the Border. But he could not disguise the failure of the play to develop any real drama from a plot in itself fit only for the 'Connoisseurs of Crime' series, of which one a week is surely quite enough for anyone to be going on with.

How Galsworthy's Forsytes will make out on the air it is too early to foresee. Muriel Levy assures us that when she dictated the final instalment of this Home Service serial to her secretary 'we were both unashamedly in tears', and not, I take it, for their own sins of adaptation. I can only report that I found the first instalment of 'Soames Forsyte, Esq.' rather densely populated with fogies, and couldn't see much behind the brave face Fleur put on her hesitations between an old love, a current husband, and a new applicant—a writer determined, if he could not go to bed, to go to Persia. But it was deftly produced by Robin Midgley and Val Gielgud, and admirably acted by a cast who seemed to have spent all their lives in the atmosphere of the Athenaeum.

I have, also, much respect for Mr. Bronowski as a champion of William Blake. But, all allowances made for the fact that 'A Man Without a Mask', in the Home Service, was not a play, but a feature, feature was just what it lacked. As a bicentennial tribute to the prophetic poet this script was bitty, restricted in range and deplorably pedestrian. Donald Wolfit has the emotional power and 'heav'd the dark bellows' for Blake, but was never really allowed to get going without Mr. Bronowski chipping in with his slender slices of potted biography. It was an unintentional case of

*Le masque tombe, l'homme reste
Et le héros s'évanouit.*

ROY WALKER

THE SPOKEN WORD

In Plato's Cave

'Is it only Common Sense?' This, as the title of a Third Programme philosophical discussion, sounded lively and seductive, as if Messrs. Ernest Gellner, D. F. Pears, G. J. Warnock, and J. W. N. Watkins had decided to give listeners a relief from the arid complexities usual to such programmes. But no—the same intellectual stops were pulled out, the same marvellous display of mental acrobatics given. Like Roy Campbell's South African novelists they used the snaffle and the bit to perfection, but one longed for the appearance of the horse. I know quite well, in saying this about these philosophical programmes, that I am being unfair, that all the speakers felt themselves firmly seated on mettlesome mounts, invisible only to

the onlooker. But I was thinking all the time of William James' definition of a philosopher as a blind man looking for a non-existent black cat in a pitch dark room.

The reason for the discussion was the two celebrated talks which Mr. Gellner gave earlier this year in which he attacked Oxford philosophy for its emphasis on linguistic analysis and for limiting itself to concepts already defined in language. It is Mr. Gellner's case that this school of philosophy believes that the classical problems of philosophy can be solved or illuminated by observing the language system within which the problems are formulated—and that this presupposes a theory of the limits of meaning and types of meaning. 'Presupposition' was a word which constantly cropped up, and it seemed to me that the defenders hedged away from a direct answer to this charge. There was a point when one of the speakers quoted with approval Mr. John Wisdom's slogan that 'all philosophy ends in platitude'. I know that Mr. Wisdom was referring to a higher order of platitude, but should the word be permissible at all in referring to such a fundamental and all-embracing subject as philosophy? Great works of philosophy never seem to me to end in any kind of platitude, but to illumine recesses of life not reached by any other form of thought.

But, in spite of its incidental brilliance and obscurity, 'Is it only Common Sense?' did seem to end at something which was essentially platitudinous. One did not care about what was being said. I felt that the recording might well have taken place in Plato's Cave.

The Third Programme celebrated the centenary of Joseph Conrad's birth with yet another mosaic portrait composed of recorded tesserae—this time expertly put together by Mr. Vincent Brome and Mr. Douglas Cleverdon. The speakers were varied and sometimes surprising. There were Miss Veronica Wedgwood's charming memories of meeting Conrad frequently as a small child, and Mr. Richard Curle's rattling stories. Mr. David Garnett had some excellent material, but he should never have been allowed to read it. The whole point of these programmes is that their mood should be conversational and spontaneous, and however much one may try to disguise the fact that one is reading it is never really successful. The best contributors to the programme were Conrad's sons, Boris and John, who sounded as if they had lived lives very different from their father's. They told little stories about him in the home which made him sound like a domestic tyrant, occasionally violent in temper and withdrawn from the family life. 'Conrad was liked by all who had relations with him. He is lucky with people', wrote his uncle, in a newly discovered letter printed last week in *The Times Literary Supplement*. It was a remark substantiated by what one heard in this programme, in spite of the domestic tyranny.

I was surprised to hear how bad Conrad's English remained to the end of his life. It was not merely a matter of accent—his syntax was often wrong. Sir John Squire remembers him saying when they first met, 'I am delighted to have the opportunity of the chance to meet you'.

One of the most interesting talks I have heard for a long time was Miss Iulia de Beausobre's Third Programme talk on 'A Religious Justification for Divorce'. Miss de Beausobre is a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, and she set out to explain to perplexed Western Christians just how the Eastern Church accepts the re-marriage of divorced people not with disapproval but by the force of its own views on mutual human love. I remember being struck, when staying in an Albanian village in Calabria, by the sanity of the Eastern Church's attitude to social matters, and by the fact that the Church believes that its priests should be

married. Miss de Beausobre talked specifically about its deeply humane attitude to divorce, but she managed to compel admiration for her Church in a more general way.

MICHAEL SWAN

MUSIC

French and English

THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA of the Radiodiffusion Française paid a visit to England last week and one of its concerts in the Royal Festival Hall was broadcast in the Third Programme. The programme consisted of César Franck's Symphony and Ravel's 'La Valse' with Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto in C minor between them. It was a pity that Jean Martinon did not choose a wholly French programme, the more so as Alexander Brailowsky merely gave one more virtuoso-pianist's account of the well-known work and in the finale was at sixes and sevens with the orchestra.

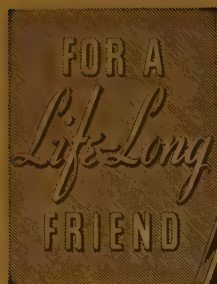
The French orchestra has an individual 'tone of voice', altogether brighter than that of its opposite number in London. The wind-players emphasise the characters of their several instruments, the oboe distinctly nasal, the trumpets brilliantly brassy. The strings produce a vibrant tone with an exciting edge to it. They do not, therefore, produce the mellow blend, each instrument assimilating itself as far as possible to its nearest relation in the orchestra, that is the ideal of our players and conductors. But there is more clarity of texture, more of that aeration between the various components of a score which Bizet, that typical French orchestrator, regarded as so important.

These qualities coupled with Martinon's brisk handling of the score gave us a fresh view of Franck's symphony. The first movement, in particular, lost that rather sanctimonious air and became a conflict, stormy and dramatic, between the opposing forces of its themes. There was no unnecessary loitering by the way, no suggestion of complacent serenity sitting in the organ-loft smiling at Faith. The movement was finely built up as a musical structure to its climaxes, the peak being that recurrence in canon of the opening *Lento*.

Franck has suffered much from the injudicious attempt of his disciple, Vincent d'Indy, to prove that the worthy organist of Ste. Clothilde achieved the consummation of all that Beethoven's genius merely adumbrated. But we should not, therefore, go to the other extreme. Franck had, as the symphony's second movement shows, a keen ear for orchestral colour, for all his tendency to treat the various sections of the band as organ-stops. His ear was not always infallible—nor, by the way, were the ears of the clarinet and horn who got badly out of tune with one another at one point in the *Allegretto*—and he could perpetrate that dreadful passage in the finale where the cor anglais' pastoral melody is brayed out by the full brass. This is a page on which our players tend to shed a softer light than the merciless glare of the French trumpets, cornets and trombones.

We could hear the difference on the following night when Sir Malcolm Sargent returned to direct the B.B.C. Orchestra in an hour's music consisting of Rossini's 'Scala di Seta' Overture, Sibelius' 'En Saga', and Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations, in the finale of which there is plenty of opportunity for the brass to overstep the boundary that separates eloquence from blatant rhetoric. Sibelius' tone-poem was given a good performance, but those who listened to 'Music Magazine' on Sunday morning will have heard an excerpt from one that better realised the characteristic resilience in the rhythm of the main subject.

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magazine was devoted to a commemoration of Sibelius on the eve of what would have been his ninety-second birthday. The contributors included Sir Thomas Beecham, Professor Abraham, and Sir Malcolm himself who that afternoon conducted a concert devoted to Sibelius' music and ranging over the products of his early years from 'Finlandia' and 'Valse Triste' to the Third Symphony. Professor Abraham's was the most extended and, from the music-lover's point of view, useful of these tributes. Sir Thomas Beecham after making a case for the great man's lighter works, which he loves to play, unfortunately got stuck in a groove (his contribution was recorded) when uttering a generalisation about Sibelius being the

last of his line. But we had just been listening to another of that line, Dr. Vaughan Williams, whose tribute to Sibelius, originally spoken on his eighty-fifth birthday, began characteristically with a long quotation from Bunyan. And the sound of the Tallis Fantasia and Symphony in E minor, splendidly played by the B.B.C. Orchestra on Friday night under Sargent, was still in our ears.

There are many respects in which our composer differs from Sibelius. The most obvious is that Vaughan Williams, who is only seven years younger than the Finn, is still producing major works thirty years after Sibelius laid down his pen. But he resembles him in his integrity of mind, in his individuality of utterance and in

his mastery over his material which he fashions into forms of his own imagination, not perhaps so highly original as Sibelius', but entirely his own. That he owes a debt to Sibelius was acknowledged in the dedication of the Fifth Symphony and patent in the Sixth the other night, for instance in those linking passages for cor anglais and bass clarinet solo. Yet how consistent Vaughan Williams is with himself! One could hear the plucked bass of the Tallis Fantasia still sounding (in its varied form) in the symphony of nearly forty years later. I don't doubt that that individual voice will have found something at once new and the same to say when his Ninth Symphony is played next year.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

The Elegy of Michel de La Lande

By WILFRID MELLERS

A programme of music by La Lande will be broadcast at 8.0 p.m. on Tuesday, December 17 (Third)

THE French classical age found its epitome in heroic tragedy and heroic opera: allied arts which can, not extravagantly, be described as a ritual of humanism. Masque and opera were a ceremony dedicated to the potential divinity of Man; and they depended on a tension between the passions of the personal life and a vision of communal order. The arioso followed the pulse of life here and now, deriving from verbal recitation and from the declamatory madrigal. The dances—especially the grandly consummatory chaconnes—and the monumental choruses imposed an architectural order upon individual licence: for the whole is more important than the parts.

Artists working for a society that believed in, or pretended to believe in, the perfectibility of Man were not prone to admit that man might be insufficient; yet the fact that they created religious art at all suggests, perhaps, a lurking apprehension of man's inadequacy. Certainly Louis XIV himself seems to have felt that religious music called for special aptitudes of mind and spirit, even though its conventions were identical with those of that focal point of society, the court opera. Thus he regarded Lully, the king-composer of the god-king, as a man of the theatre; and in the latter, less worldly, phase of his reign sought out and fostered another composer as representative of the state Church. With typical acumen he discovered an obscure organist whose character was as simple, even saintly, as Lully's was sophisticatedly amoral. This man—Michel-Richard de La Lande (1657-1726) was also a composer of genius who, accepting the conventions of Lullian theatre music, re-fashioned them to religious use.

The most substantial branch of La Lande's work consists of his psalm settings for soli, two choirs, strings and organ, written for the Chapelle Royale. Superficially, they are ceremonial music; and they exploit the same ambivalence between the private and the public life as do Lully's operas. La Lande's music tends to be more polyphonic than Lully's: he was trained in the discipline of seventeenth-century ecclesiastical counterpoint, as represented by his predecessor at the Chapel, Henri Du Mont. But La Lande's polyphony is utterly remote from the floating, almost metreless, polyphony of a great master of Christian tradition such as Dufay. It is rigidly, powerfully controlled by dance metre and simple harmonic clauses: so that the antiphonal double chorus becomes a ritual symbolising worldly glory, as later it does in Handel.

Against this 'public' expression of splendour is poised the passion of individual experience.

The solo parts, singing mostly in arioso, represent the 'I' who suffers, who calls to God from the depths. The sinuous line flows from the inflections of a voice speaking direct to us; the rich dissonances of the continuo point the pathos of the declamation. Yet the subtlety of La Lande's art lies in the way in which the private and the public life interact. The passionate ululation of the solo voice may be answered by a semichorus of two, three, or four voices, so that personal grief is given universal application: we are all involved, for the 'I' suffers (as Christ died) for us. Moreover, the 'I' remains private, segregated, only while suffering. When the 'I' grows joyful he relinquishes the here-and-now of French declamation for something more objective: arioso turns into formal Italian *bel canto* or into French dance rhythm. The 'I' thus becomes affiliated to the ceremonial dance-chorus; the human ego, happy, is already on the way to paradise on earth.

The process works the other way round, too. The communal dance-ceremony may suddenly be translated into the world of personal experience, when solo voices are isolated from the massive homophony, in a broken, declamatory style stemming from the chromatic madrigal. The ultimate climax almost always comes when the dance-ceremonial of the chorus is identified with the declamatory harmonic pathos of the personal life. For instance, the terrifying penultimate chorus to the *De Profundis* 'fugues', a brief theme similar in contour to declamatory arioso. But the counterpoint is not a principle of order in its own right; it is a means of creating a dense texture even more acutely dissonant than the arioso itself. Both the declamatory passion and the harmonic intensity are ennobled, disciplined, by the steady, march-like rhythm: the interweaving of dissonant appoggiaturas depends on a periodic strong and weak beat, and therefore on the domination of Time.

As a consequence, the music has at once personal pathos and a cumulative, impersonal momentum; and this is what one might expect, for the personal tragedy is social and the social tragedy personal, since society is an aggregation of human beings. The majestically unflinching march of dissonant fugato is a ritual celebration of the human capacity to endure. Though it hints at a world of wonder and terror beyond the fallible pomp of mortal glory, its spirit is stoic rather than Christian, and consistently elegiac.

Lully's habitual manner in church music is pompous and circumstantial, like the victory *Te Deum* of 1677, in which we find the splendour of antiphonal choirs and orchestras but the

minimum of inner harmonic tension and sinuosity of line. Occasionally—in the *Miserere* of 1664 that so disturbed Mme de Sévigné and in the most beautiful *De Profundis* of twenty years later—he discovered the mysterious moon that complements the blaze of the kingly Sun. But what is exceptional in Lully, in La Lande is habitual. His art is magnificent (for its pomp is an imaginative vision, not a façade): and also frightening (for it suggests that the equilibrium which is civilisation may at any moment be destroyed). His greatest music is valedictory because it celebrates not so much the glory that is as the glory that might have been.

Having this profoundly equivocal sense of glory it was natural that La Lande should have expressed himself mainly in church music. He was, however, also called upon to create music designed unequivocally to celebrate worldly splendour; and even in this the distinction of the music cannot be separated from La Lande's awareness of human limitations. In the 'Symphonies des soupers du Roi' the superb panache of the melodies, the extrovert zest of the rhythms, the bold lucidity of the orchestral colours create, from music-for-eating-to, a vision of civilisation; Louis XIV must have handled a knife and fork, La Lande makes us feel, as he played billiards—with the air of a master of the world.

Yet throughout La Lande's pastoral divertissements (the 'Symphonies des Noëls', for instance) we may chance on a sudden chromatic obliquity, a seductive seventh chord, that imbues the elegant assurance with a tang of nostalgia. This quality is much more strongly marked in Couperin's pastoral pieces and still more, a little later, in Rameau. But it is unmistakably present in La Lande, telling us that there can in fact be no paradise on earth. If there is a Golden Age it is either a dream, a creation of man's imagination, or a metaphysical heaven—a state beyond the temporal and material. The question is left open: as it is also, perhaps, in the grander and deeper vision of La Lande's ostensibly liturgical works.

Among recent books are: *English Church Plate 597-1830*, by Charles Oman (Oxford, £6 6s.); *Antique Jewellery*, by Erich Steingraber (Thames and Hudson, £3 3s.); *Philipp Cave*, by the Abbé Henri Breuil (Collins, £5 5s.); *Great Bible Pictures*, by Margaret H. Bulley (Batsford, 25s.); and *The Connoisseur Year Book 1958*, edited and compiled by L. G. G. Ramsey (The Connoisseur, 25s.); *Caricature, from Leonardo to Picasso*, by Werner Hofmann (Calder, 36s.); and *The Changing Face of Beauty*, by Madge Garland (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £2 2s.).



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Odourless Paints

By DAVID ROE

IF you are one of those people who do not like the smell of paint, here is good news. Over the past few months several firms have been marketing odourless paints. But, first of all, I think the term odourless needs a little explaining. These paints are not entirely without odour but there is no doubt that the old paint smell has been taken out and the faint smell that is left is not unpleasant to most people.

In ordinary paints there are two things which are mainly responsible for the smell. It is the solvent or thinner in the paint which gives it a strong smell while drying. But even when the paint has dried you still get a rather sour smell hanging about for a week or two. This sour smell comes from the linseed oil in the paint, and it has been found that if you replace the linseed oil with soya bean oil the sour smell pretty well disappears.

So far as the new solvent is concerned, it is a by-product of aviation petrol. At first it was in short supply because it had to be imported from America. But it is now being made in this country and, for all practical purposes, there is no longer any shortage. This means that between now and the spring there ought to be many more of these paints coming on the market.

Somebody asked me the other day how this affected the new jelly paints and one-coat finishes. The paint manufacturers can make both these types and the ordinary liquid kinds of paint with the new odourless raw materials, so there is no reason why you should not choose the combination that most appeals to you. And, by the way, whichever one you choose, the fact that it has the odourless solvent in it will make the brushing properties a little easier.

Are there any snags? As far as I can see, there is nothing to worry about. They do take a little longer to dry, but they still dry properly overnight. And the glossy paints need to be well brushed out or there may be a slight tendency for runs to occur. And price? You may have to pay a little more for odourless paints.—*Home Service*

Pastry making teaches much that is an integral part of good cooking—manipulative skill, delicacy of touch, the exercising of judgement in mixing and baking and in the blending of flavours for fillings. It is for this reason, Ann Hardy says, that in a series of books entitled 'The Principles of Good Cooking' she has chosen to start with *Pastry Making* (Bell, 8s. 6d.). Miss Hardy gives clear direc-

tions for making different types of pastry, and follows up with appropriate recipes, savoury and sweet.

* * *

A light-hearted book for the more experienced and adventurous cook is *With Gusto and Relish* by Lord Westbury and Donald Downes (André Deutsch, 15s.). 'The target of this book', say the authors, 'is the person who likes to cook, takes pleasure in eating, and even more pleasure and pride in preparing food for his friends. . . . The book represents our point of view and lays no claim at all to being either infallible or all-embracing'.

Notes on Contributors

ERIC SEVEREID (page 970): Washington correspondent of the Columbia Broadcasting System

B. N. GOEDHART (page 971): London correspondent of *De Telegraaf* of Amsterdam

PRZEMYSLAW MROCZKOWSKI (page 979): head of the English Department in the Catholic University of Lublin

KENNETH F. CHAPMAN (page 983): editor of *Stamp Collecting*

IULIA DE BEAUSOBRE (page 991): author of *The Woman Who Could Not Die* and *The Flame in the Snow*

Crossword No. 1,437.

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened); book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

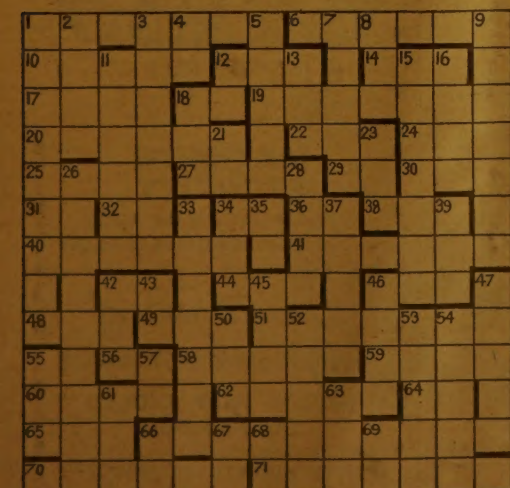
Closing date: first post on Thursday, December 19. Entries should be on the printed diagram and envelopes containing them should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked 'Crossword' in the left-hand top corner. In all matters connected with the crossword the Editor's decision is final

When you have completed the puzzle, for your further 1 Down, you are asked to make a journey into the interior taking care not to cross any bars. Those who return safely are asked to give an outline of their journey (for less fortunate travellers), and also to state what they found. Entrance is by the back-door.

(D = down; U = up; B = back.)

CLUES ACROSS

1. Perplexed? Don't give up. There's aid near, in the form of the daughter of the original owner of this puzzle (7)
6. See 28 D.
10. Stupefy a fanatical preacher of war (5)



1 Down.

By Leon

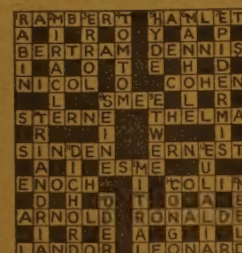
12—47 D. Pioneer airman, royal architect and predecessor of Leon (8)
14. Own part of a plain (3)
17. A caveat Mrs. Centlivre may end on (4)
18 B—25 D. The ordinary in Shakespeare with some contempt (4)
19. See 55 B.
20. The last word in beer (6)
22 B. See 29 A.
24. Bring back part of a carcass of beef. Ay (3) for instance (4)
25. Holy patron (ignoring the anachronism) of 12 A—47 D.
27. Developer developer (4)
29—22 B. Drink greedily a large draught of liquor (5)
30—46 A. Cowardly spirit, but cheerful nevertheless (6)
31—66 D. Spot a small animal (4)
32—65 B. — taffeta fellow. All dressed up in slashed silk (5)
34—69 U. French town (4)
36. See 59 A.
38. Misuse old court (3)
40. A writ created by Statute of Westminster (1285) (6)
41. Dish of whipped cream. Mix us some! (6)
42. See 55 U.
44. For these devils, we must look to Niponese myth (3)
46. See 30 A.
48. A standstill without 64 B. is a draw (3)
49. Could be anyone (3)
51. Morbid displacement of parts (7)
55 B—19 A. Conference view, roughly speaking, of those across the Channel (9)
56—69 U. Wealthy producer of something beggarly (4)
58. Slow unweildy trading ship, comparatively rare nowadays (5)
59—36 A. A well-known name (6)
60. 1,210 square yards (4)
62. Short journeys (5)
64 B. See 48 A.
65 B. See 32 A.
66. German disector, whose 70 A. are not to be found on any map (10)
70. Small geographical locations (6)
71. Enveloped in cloud? No, just naked (7)

CLUES DOWN

1. 'Not afraid with any —'. A common saying (9)
2. The type between an apple and a gem (4)
3. Parliament of fifty-two members (7)
4—56 D. Ventures in Aberdeen (5)
5. Formerly formerly formerly till 25 A., for instance, follows (5)
7. Transatlantic oar-blades (5)
8. Crazy wireless gives an old English dance (3)
9. God I have, to put it briefly, found very wearing (7)

11. Covered in mud and miry (6)
12—4 U. A pair of units treated as one (4)
13. Forearm measurement (3)
15. Formerly an indoor plant, one might say (7)
16 U—34 D. Governor of Messina who had an heroic daughter (7)
18. Abroad from the mass into the open air (3)
21—57 U. At Ragnarok he survived his father (4)
23 U—68 D. Draughts pulleys with ropes not parallel (5)
26. Musical suites? Maybe (9)
28—6 A. 'And light from darkness by the — divided' (10)
33. Type of bath-sponge (7)
34. See 16 U.
35—67 D. Moss-capsules (4)
37. Marching orders (5)
39. See 66 D.
42—43 D. Assuredly Scottish (5)
43. See 42 D.
45. Finished (4)
46. The violent commotion which precedes many games (4)
47. See 12 A.
50. See 4 D.
52. Audible sound of a small river in the United States (5)
53. 'Piercing the — darkness from afar' (5)
54. Guardian of the apples, and member of the Asynjor (5)
55 U—42 A. Space for reading (5)
57 U. See 21 D.
61 U—67 D. Valuable old Scots coins (5)
63. Prize that is never won (3)
66—39 D. To destroy or bring to ruin or perdition (5)
67. See 35 D. and 61 U.
68. See 23 U.
69 U. See 34 A. and 56 A.

Solution of No. 1,435



NOTES

Nine across lights are Christian names of well-known people. The remainder are surnames of other celebrities and are anagrams of the first nine.

Down. 6. M-AN-H-OLE; 7. E-(s)PIDER-M-IS; 10. IRRADIANT*; 11. (. . .) WeD-ICHOR*-D(ing . . .); 13. LATIM(e)R*; 15. NE-ELD.

* anagram.

Prizewinners: 1st prize: W. K. Armitstead (Colchester); 2nd prize: J. J. Holloway (Barton-on-Sea); 3rd prize: Mrs. J. E. Laver (West Byfleet).

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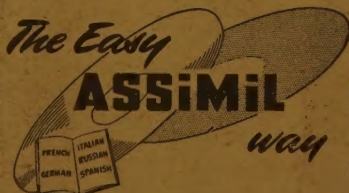
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